

LETTERS
FROM THE
REV. MR. JOB ORTON;
AND THE REV.
SIR JAMES STONHOUSE, BART. M. D.
TO THE
REV. THOMAS STEDMAN, M. A.

Vicar of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

“Betwixt Mr. Hooker and these two persons, there was a sacred friendship: a friendship made up of religious principles, which increased daily by a similitude of inclinations to the same recreations and studies.—In this sweet, this blessed, this spiritual, amity, they went on for many years: and, as the holy prophet faith, so they took sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends.”

HOOKE's Life, by WALTON, 8vo. 1793.

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LETTERS

TO

A YOUNG CLERGYMAN,

FROM THE LATE

REVEREND MR. JOB ORTON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

“ He was of a disposition ready to embrace and oblige all men ; allowing others to differ from him, even in opinions that were very dear to him ; and provided men did but *fear God, and work righteousness*, he loved them heartily, how distant soever from him in judgement about things less necessary : in all which, he is very worthy to be a pattern to men of all persuasions whatsoever.” — *See Archibishop TILLOTSON’S Funeral Sermon for the Rev. Mr. THOMAS GOUGE, — who was a Nonconformist.*

PRINTED

BY J. AND W. EDDOWES, SHREWSBURY.

1800.



TO THE REVEREND

JAMES STONHOUSE, M. D.

RECTOR OF

GREAT AND LITTLE CHEVEREL,

WILTSHIRE.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

It is with great pleasure I take
this opportunity, of paying a tribute
of *public* respect to you. Twenty

A 2

years

years have now nearly elapsed since our friendship first began: which has been a delightful *source* of pleasure and improvement to me. MR. ORTON brought us together at first, soon after I began my *clerical career*, and from the kind offices of you *both*, it received an happy direction — *both* having advised, counselled, cautioned, and encouraged me.* In your parish, SIR, I spent some of my happiest and most useful days; in a situation favourable to study and self-improvement, among an affectionate, and in general, a tractable people. The scene has since been

* Witness these Letters, and your Hints to a Curate.

been considerably changed: but the respect and good-will, which I found among your farmers and cottagers, no length of time will be able ever to efface from my memory.

The greatest part of the Letters, contained in this little volume, were written by Mr. ORTON to me whilst I resided at CHEVEREL; which I found of considerable *use* to me there, and to the parishes to which I afterwards removed. I had selected most of them from a large number, with which he had favoured me, to be a kind of *Me-*

morial

memorial* of their honoured Writer, and as a *Manual* for my future use. When I shewed them to You, you were pleased to speak of them as Letters you much esteemed; and when I expressed an inclination of publishing them, for the service of my younger Brethren

* “ For that *pattern* which I saw in him, and for that *conversation* which I had with him, I know how much I have to *answer for* to God. And though my reflecting on that which I knew in him, gives me just cause of being *deeply humbled* in myself, and before God; yet I feel no more sensible pleasure in any thing, than in going over in my thoughts all that I saw and observed in him.”—*Bishop BURNET concerning Archbishop LEIGHTON.—Pastoral Care, page 221, Fifth edition.*

Brethren in the Ministry,* the design met with your approbation and encouragement. Mr. ORTON hath already appeared in the world under the respectable characters of a commentator, a sermon-writer, and a biographer: and if I introduce him in a new light, as that of a *correspondent*, I hope, I shall not lessen his merit; the general contents of the following Letters

* An eminent PRELATE, to whom these Letters were presented, was pleased to make the following remark on them.—“ They may edify more than the younger part of the clergy, for whom alone you intend them.”

And says ANOTHER:—“ Accept my thanks for the pleasure I have received from the perusal of

ters being on subjects of considerable importance ; the advice given in them, with respect to the *Pastoral Care*, having been found practicable, (especially *in Country Parishes*;) and which was the result of his own experience and observation.

To you, SIR, I am inclined, from various motives, to INSCRIBE these
Letters

of Mr. ORTON's Letters. The good sense, warm piety, becoming zeal for the promotion of christian virtue, and rendering the pastoral character respectable and useful, which run through the publication, make it worthy the attention of the parochial clergy of all ages."

Other testimonies of a similar kind might be adduced, were it deemed necessary, which shew the great candour and moderation of their writers.

Letters of our common Friend; which
you will be pleased to consider as a
Testimony of my sincere respect for
you. I am,

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your obliged

and

most humble servant,

THOMAS STEDMAN.

*Sbre-wsbury,
April, 1791.*

In the CRITICAL REVIEW for June, 1791, these Letters are thus noticed.

Mr. ORTON was a very respectable dissenting minister; and his advice to the young clergyman is truly excellent. It displays the full character of its author, strictly, rationally, and, in general, clearfully pious: judicious, zealous in doing good, and indefatigable in being useful. The Letters are not indeed of the fashionable mould, for they inculcate a strict attention to the duty of a parish-priest; a regard to the morals of his parishioners; frequent conversation on moral and religious subjects; an earnest endeavour to lead them to reflect, and to catch

catch in turn, hints for the future conduct, by observing what seemed most striking, what appeared most interesting. The observations on different authors interspersed are frequently just.

*Extract from the MONTHLY REVIEW,
for August, 1791.*

Mr. ORTON has been long known and esteemed, as a man of integrity, of exemplary piety, virtue and benevolence, as well as of erudition. Mr. STEDMAN, the editor, was the person to whom the Letters were originally written. They contain observations, which

which may be useful to all persons, but are particularly adapted for the service of the clergy, and the younger part of them. Among others, we find some sensible remarks on *frugality*; the necessity of attending to which is urged with great fervour, and perhaps, could never be more seasonably pressed than at the present time. — This little volume is very deserving of the regard of those, for whose benefit it is immediately designed.

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LETTERS

LETTERS

TO

A YOUNG CLERGYMAN.-

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

Kidderminster, Oct. 4, 1771.

I AM very glad for Dr. STON-HOUSE's sake, and also for *your own*, that you intend accepting the curacy of *Little Cheverel*.* The doctor is a learned, genteel, good tempered man;

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truly

* Near Devizes, in Wiltshire.

truly serious, rationally evangelical, and judiciously zealous. He will treat you like a friend and a brother, and you will be much pleased and improved by his company and conversation. He preaches, during his residence, twice every Sunday, and has a lecture on Wednesday evening. But *ill health* obliges him to live the greater part of the year at *Bristol*, for the benefit of the waters there. I could say more of his parish every way, than the doctor chooses to write to you of it himself, because he would not raise too high expectations. — I am pleased with the *list of books* * you intend taking with you, but you will allow me to add, that I hope you will
take

* “ The head of my college procured me a curacy in a small country town. Thither I went, not without my *collection of books*, the use of which I would not have foregone for a mitre.”

KNOX.

take some of your *classics*, in order to keep up, and improve your knowledge of the languages; especially such as may increase your critical acquaintance with the New Testament.

I am your affectionate

and faithful servant,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER II.

I COMPLY with your request in writing to you, though I have nothing to say very deserving of your notice. But I am determined there shall be no defect in my friendly regards for you, how many soever there may be in the manner of expressing them.

I was glad to hear of your safe arrival at *Cheverel*; though it was a mortification to me not to see you in your way thither.— You retire to a COUNTRY VILLAGE under some disadvantages, arising from the season of the year, and the agreeable situation you have left.* But you have good reason

* BRIDGNORTH, in the county of *Salop*. The Editor's birth-place:— near which are the venerable remains of *HORDE*'s *Park*, the seat of his ancestors of that name for many centuries.

reason to believe that you are in the way of duty, following your great Master's directions, and doing his work in that station which he hath appointed for you ; and I have a cheerful persuasion, that you will be made very useful in it. To see this, will add charms to solitude, and pleasure to study and preaching : and abundantly make up what otherwise you would greatly regret the loss of. Every person to whom your labours prove beneficial, will be a faithful friend to you, and love and honour you as a spiritual father. Though your distance from your good Mother + is a painful circumstance, yet, as she has other dutiful children with her, this will alleviate it both to her and to you.

B 3

And

+ Some afflictive circumstances, which afterwards befell this *excellent parent*, especially a paralytic seizure, reminded her children of the following

And surely our Master very reasonably requires us to leave father, mother, house, &c. yea all, to follow him. (Matt. x. 37.) And you well know what he promises to those who do it with courage and chearfulness.

As you preach but *once* on a Sunday, permit me to advise you on the other

following lines of Mr. POPE, which were descriptive of their filial affection towards her.

Me, let the tender office long engage,
To rock the cradle of reposing age ;
With lenient aris, extend a *Mother's* breath,
Make langour smile, and smooth the bed of death ;
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep awhile one Parent from the sky.

She died April 8, 1793, in the 74th year of her age. (*Jude 21, latter part.*) She had been educated a dissenter, by her pious parents, who lived at *West Bromwich*, in *Staffordshire* ; and continued such till she married, May 20, 1741 ; her husband being a strict conformist ; by whom she had thirteen children : four of whom survive, desiring to "arise up, and call her blessed."

other part of the day, to give your auditory a short, plain, and practical *Exposition of the Epistle or Gospel for the day*; which will be a very useful exercise to yourself — extremely agreeable to the parish — and, if I mistake not, is required in some of your canons or episcopal directions. (See canon 49.) Archbishop TENNISON, in his Letter to his suffragans, (1695) saith — “ I recommend to your care the preaching of your clergy in the afternoons upon catechetical heads; both that the people may be better grounded in the faith, and also kept from other assemblies.” Many of our elder clergy used expounding in the manner I propose; and Bp. BURNET in his *Pastoral Care*, urges *long texts, and short sermons*, that is, *expounding*.*

* See also Abp. HORT’s Instructions to the Clergy, p. 24, &c. and Abp. SECKER’s third Charge to his Clergy.

I suppose Dean STANHOPE's Exposition of the Epistles and Gospels were delivered in public, and also that of HOLE on the Catechism, and others. — At other seasons, it may be advisable to *catechise in public, + the elder children and youth*, on that part of the Sunday, when you do not preach, and to *expound* some of the catechism upon J. LEWIS's plan, using the helps of some commentators upon it. + And an hour once

+ It is said of Mr. HOOKE, (author of the Ecclesiastical Polity) that his custom was to preach once every Sunday, and he or his curate to catechise after the second lesson in the evening prayer. See his Life by WALTON. — “ Oh, saith a worthy clergyman, for the primitive custom of catechizing! Every youth can preach, but he is a man indeed that can profitably catechise.”

‡ Particularly “ Lectures on the Catechism of the Church of England; by WILLIAM GILPIN, M. A. vicar of Boldre, near Lymington;

once a week might be profitably devoted to *catechise* the younger children, either in the chancel of the church, or at the parsonage house, which suits you and the season of the year best, to whom you might, and must talk plainly and familiarly. You will find this very useful to *yourself*, as well as to *them*; as you will thereby increase a habit of using plain language, and will see how far they understand you, and by what they are most struck and affected. Serious parents will like you for this care and attention to their

off-

ton; the second edition: printed for R. BLAMIRE, in the *Strand*."—The same gentleman has lately published a volume of "Sermons preached to a Country Congregation: to which are added, a few Hints for Sermons; intended chiefly for the Use of the Younger Clergy:" which deserve particular attention: the editor had almost said, the *preaching* of the younger clergy.

offspring. — I found it of great use to encourage the young men of my congregation at *Shrewsbury*, to come to me from eight o'clock to ten on a Sunday evening, and to talk in a friendly manner to them on any useful subject, especially the sermons of the preceding day. By this practice I learnt much from them — what in a sermon they did not understand, and what they felt and were improved by in it. No studies at the university can teach this experimental knowledge — this acquaintance with human nature. — As I suppose the doctor hath left you some plain, practical Books to *give away* among the parishioners, it will be natural to take opportunities of asking them, whether they have read and understood them. By so doing, you may introduce some serious discourse, and learn something of their characters, which it would otherwise be

be difficult to do, without its appearing forced and unseasonable; and they may be led to join in the conversation, or else they may only give you the hearing. The principal difficulty in the pastoral care is to get our people to converse freely, and to open their minds. And there is no judiciously suiting and applying remedies, without knowing the disease, and the patient's constitution; and this, in many cases, can only be learned from themselves.

— You are, no doubt, duly sensible that *God giveth the increase* (1 Cor. iii. 6.); and you will act upon that good old maxim, *bene orasse, est bene studuisse*. May God multiply the seed you are sowing in public and private, and increase in you and by you, the fruits of righteousness!

Your desire of my advice in your present situation, must be my apology for the freedom I have taken in this letter.

letter. As to any other particulars, I must refer you to Dr. DODDRIDGE'S *Life*, and Mr. PHILIP HENRY'S,* the situation of the latter in particular, so exactly resembling your own. If you meet with HERBERT'S *Country Parson*,† pray read it. Probably you may

* A most instructive book; containing much curious history of the times in which he lived; and which Mr. ORTON seems to have made his model for writing his excellent *Life of Dr. DODDRIDGE*. The 4th edition of which was published by Mr. ORTON in 1765, price 2s 6d.

† Another useful book; which is now become scarce, and too little known by the clergy. The late pious Bishop HORNE had once intended reprinting it: but in a letter received a few months before his death, he writes — “As I have no longer any thoughts of reprinting HERBERT'S *Country Parson*, to see it done by Mr. * * will be a sincere pleasure.” — Mr. CHURTON, in his account of that amiable and good man, and exemplary parish priest, Dr. TOWNSON, late rector of

Malpas,

may do this in *Wiltshire*, as he was rector of *Bemerton*, in that county.

I am your faithful friend,

Dec. 4, 1771.

JOB ORTON.

L E T-

Malpas, in *Cheshire*, informs us, that during his last illness, he read Mr. HERBERT's *Country Parson*, together with ISAAC WALTON's Lives of GEORGE HERBERT, &c. "with a view, no doubt, to trim his lamp and prepare for his Lord, by comparing his conduct with the examples of those meek and holy men, described by that pleasing and faithful biographer."

Lord EDWARD HERBERT, Baron of *Chirbury*, (the celebrated deist, and who was the first, and one of the most eminent writers in the cause of deism) was Mr. GEORGE HERBERT's eldest brother. His Lordship was born at *Eyton*, in Shropshire, and received a part of his education at *Diddlebury*, in the same county. — In his Life written by himself, (which is a kind of entertaining romance) he makes mention of his brother in the following manner. — " My brother GEORGE was so excellent a scholar, that

LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

Jan. 31, 1772.

As a sincere friend to the reputation and usefulness of the clergy, and

that he was made public orator of the university of *Cambridge*, some of whose english works are extant, which tho' they be rare in their kind, yet are far short of expressing those perfections he had in the greek and latin tongue, and all divine and human literature. His life was most holy and exemplary ; insomuch, that about *Salisbury*, where he lived beneficed for many years, he was little less than *sainted*. He was not exempt from passion and choler, being infirmities to which all our race is subject ; but that excepted, without reproach in his actions." Lord **BACON** dedicated to him a translation of some *Psalms* into english verse. See also his *Life* at the end of his *Country Parson*, and sacred Poems.

Bemerton has been remarkable for the number of its rectors, who have distinguished themselves in the literary world : as **HERBERT**, **NORRIS**, **HAWES**, **Coxe**, &c.

and the honour of our common christianity, I am an enemy to *Pluralities* in general. But you are so circumstanced, that I see no material objection to your acceptance of the curacy of *Great Cheverel*.* Your sphere of usefulness will be enlarged; the inhabitants of that village and its environs will enjoy your labours, without being exposed to censure for rambling from their own fold, and deserting their established pastor, who I find is very old, and too infirm to officiate any longer among them. I presume, as the villages are so near to one another, all they of *Little Cheverel*, who attend your Sunday morning prayers, will, without difficulty, accompany you to *Great Cheverel*; and perhaps will come there with more spirit, as they will be to hear you preach; and they of that parish

* An adjoining parish.

parish will be likely to attend your
prayers and sermons in the afternoon.
This was the case with Mr. JENKS,†
to

† The Rev. Mr. BENJAMIN JENKS (author
of the Book of Prayers, and other practical
treatises) was descended from an ancient
and respectable family, at *Eaton under Hey-
wood*, in the county of *Salop*. He was related
to Bishop WILLIAMS, of *Chichester*, to whom
he dedicates his Book of Prayers. He was
some time curate of *Harley*, before he became
rector of that parish. On the death of the
preceding incumbent, RICHARD Earl of *BRAD-
FORD*, patron of the living, hearing Mr. JENKS
spoken of respectfully by the parishioners,
went one Sunday, in private, to hear him
preach; and was so much pleased with his
discourse, that he presented him to the living,
and made him his chaplain. Mr. JENKS had
also the living of *Kenley*, a small village about
two miles distant from *Harley*, at both which
churches he officiated alternately, the people of
each parish usually attending him. He kept
no curate till old age and infirmities obliged
him. He preached commonly without notes,
and prayed without a form both before and
after.

while he held the livings of *Harley* and *Kenley* together ; and thus he satisfied his own well-informed and ten-

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der

after sermon. “ I have heard (says he) bishops and dignitaries, and many doctors and divines of our Church, all very learned and pious, *pray without the book*, both before their sermons and upon other occasions, and with such a rational and raised devotion, as hath been so far from being grating and offensive, that it hath been very instructive and edifying.” His people had a high respect and veneration for him ; with whom on proper occasions he would be very easy and familiar, still maintaining much authority over them.

He was remarkable for great candour and moderation towards worthy persons of different religious persuasions ; of which, the editor of these Letters has in his possession some extraordinary instances. He preached at *Harley* fifty six years, and was allowed by the patron to nominate his successor, the Rev. Mr. PAIN-TER, who resembled him in piety, zeal, and moderation.

Mr. JENKS had been married twice. His first wife’s name was BAUGH, and related

to

der conscience, and vindicated himself to the world for being a pluralist. The main thing to be feared (should you

to a family of that name in or near *Ludlow* : by whom he had two children, a son and a daughter : the son died an infant, and the daughter married Mr. *BRADBURN* of *Wolftaston*, near *Shrewsbury*, father of the late *JOHN BRADBURN*, Esq. of *Chesterton*, near *Bridgnorth*.— His second wife, whose maiden name was *HUNT*, was the widow of a clergyman ; by whom he had no child. She was buried in *St. Chad's Church, Shrewsbury*.

Mr. *JENKS*, we are told, used to indulge himself in some little fancies : such as his keeping his coffin by him many years, in which were two skulls, one of which was a near relation's. It appears, that he made it a kind of wardrobe : see his second volume of *Meditations*, No. *xcviii*. But this was no very uncommon custom, in those times, practised in order to familiarize the thoughts of mortality. See the *Life of Bishop KENN*, and others. — This worthy man died *May 10th, 1724*, in the 78th year of his age ; and was buried in the Chancel of *Harley* church ; where is a neat monument

you accept this curacy) is, lest your proper parish, having no service in the morning, should contract an habit of profaning or mispending the sabbath. But I know you will caution them on this head, and exhort and encourage them to go with you: and I hope and believe, they have such a regard to you and the doctor, and so much sense of religion, at least

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decency,

monument erected to his memory, with his own arms, *viz.* *argent*, three boar's heads couped *sable*, a chief indented of the last; impaling **BAUCH** of *Aldon Court*, in the county of *Salop*, *viz.* *gules*, a *fess*, *vaxe*, between three mullets *argent*; with this epitaph inscribed;

Venerabilis Vir, Ben. Jenks.
In hac ecclesiâ per 56 annos
Docendo, vivendo, scribendo,
Animis lucrandis ineubuit.
Tandem, Domino vocante,
Servus, bonus et fidelis,
Cœlo maturus
Intravit in gaudium æternum
1omo die Maii, A. D. 1724
Ætatis suæ 78.

decency, that this evil will not arise. It is an encouraging circumstance, that the parish is so desirous of your services. Upon the whole, your work will be much the same, as if you had a parish in a large town, where some parts of it were as far distant from others as the two parishes of the *Cheverels* are. Let me entreat you to be *careful of your health*, as walking home after preaching, and your lungs being warmed by exercise, if the air be *cold*, may be injurious to you without great caution: walking to *Great Cheverel*, when the weather is *hot*, and going immediately into a large cold church, may be equally prejudicial: and returning home late at night from funerals, may be worse than either. I know not what is the custom of those parishes; but you ought to make a point of having the funerals early. Last night, in the midst of a thick snow

snow and severe frost, our vicar and his curate were burying two corpses after five o'clock by candle light. This ought not to be endured. You will excuse these hints, as young ministers do not always attend sufficiently to such *minutiae*.

If you find any serious or teachable young men at *Great Cheverel*, I suppose you will join them to the little society which you have already formed in your other parish, as they will not think it much trouble to come so short a way to meet them. Or, if that cannot be done, perhaps they might be engaged to meet together on a Sunday evening, in their own village, for reading and religious conversation; especially, if you can find some prudent and experienced christian there, who will preside over, and assist them.*—

c 3 I submit

* Such a person was found in the next parish of *West-Lavington* — one DAVID SAUNDERS, a poor

I submit it to your consideration, whether it would not be adviseable to fix on a *stated day weekly* to visit your new flock; as then they will expect you;

and

a poor honest shepherd, who had acquired a surprizing knowledge of the scriptures, readiness in prayer, and spiritual conversation. He used to keep his bible in the thatch of his hut on *Salisbury-plain*; by reading which, and prayer, he seemed to keep up a constant communion with God.—The editor has been most agreeably reminded of this *extraordinary man*, by reading Mrs. HANNAH MORE's pleasing little tract, called “*The Shepherd of Salisbury-plain*,” price one penny. Sold by S. HAZARD, printer to the *Cheap Repository* for religious and moral Tracts, at *Bath*.—The first person he met with, as he was riding into the village of *Cheverel* to settle in that curacy, was *this shepherd*: who told him, in a conversation he had with him some time after, that taking the stranger to be the minister expected there, he could not help repeating to himself those words of St. *Paul*, *Rom. x. 15.* “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

—*the David Garrick*

—*Book*

and I hope dispose their business so, that they may be more at leisure to receive you. You will, I doubt not, take notice (particular, tender notice) of their children; enquire if they have learned their catechism, ask them a few questions in it, which will give you a natural opportunity of dropping some hints of encouragement. In the same view, you will ask them what text you preached on the preceding Sunday, and whether they remember any thing which you then said. This will give you a handle to remind them of what they should have particularly attended to and observed; engage their attention another time; and inoffensively admonish and instruct their parents, and others of the family, who may be present; who sometimes are but larger children in knowledge and understanding, and need *milk* as much as the less. — You will sometimes call

upon the old incumbent, shew him all proper respect; and you may, perhaps, have an opportunity of suggesting a seasonable hint to him, without giving him offence: for many teachers need to be taught.

As Providence hath led you into a sphere of *double* service, I have no doubt but you will double your diligence and your prayers: in which I heartily concur, that you may have a double portion of the Spirit of your divine Master, and that his strength may be sufficient for you.

There is no book I have so often read as CORBET'S *Self-employment in Secret.** It is always upon my desk; it is my *vade-mecum* in travelling; it is by my bed-side in sickness. I can read

* A new edition of this book was printed in 1772, by the Rev. WILLIAM UNWIN, M. A. rector of Stock cum Ramsden, Essex. Sold by J. and F. RIVINGTON, St. Paul's Church Yard, price sixpence.

read a little in this, when I can read nothing else: it is the best manual I know for a christian and a minister. His prudential maxims are excellent, founded on much experience and knowledge of mankind: and 'bating a few phrases, common in those days, but awkward now, there is great sprightliness and strength in it. It is indeed, (as Mr. Howe in his preface calls it) "the anatomy of his heart:" and happy the heart, that can trace its image in itself! It will furnish excellent materials for addressing conscience, and directing your hearers to judge of their spiritual state, and preaching experimentally, which is the life and soul of preaching.

I hope your zeal in disposing of the Books* you speak of, was judicious.

* Two popish books the editor met with in a parochial visit, and which were replaced by others.

cious. Some such books, though containing bad divinity, may be curious in an historical view, or throw some light into some parts of antiquity; and therefore deserve to be read and kept. I have often picked up a pearl from a dunghill, and so am less curious in my choice of books to read, than many others; and, indeed, than I ought to be, had I less time for reading. Some valuable anecdotes from some very trifling books, have made my sermons more entertaining and instructive than otherwise they would have been: therefore it may be well to run over an indifferent book before it be slaughtered. An *Index Expurgatorius* is a dangerous thing.

I am your faithful

friend and servant,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

March 30, 1772.

I AM glad of your second curacy, as it enlarges your work, rather than as it increaseth your wages. I was lately reading of a clergyman in your county, who had two small livings, at which he officiated as you purpose doing. He went to the weak and old at each place; and the strong followed him reciprocally.

The plan of your introductory discourse, which you sent me, of *not seeking theirs, but them*, 2 Cor. xii. 14. is extremely pertinent and good. A sermon on the Spring, a few Sundays hence, as illustrating the spread of the gospel in the world — and the progress and nature of a work of grace in the heart — and the resurrection of the dead,

dead, may be very striking and useful. See *Mark* iv. 26—29. *Isaiah* xxvi. 19. *Solomon's Song* ii. 11, 12. Men love sermons that come home to their business and bosoms.

I am very sensible of your weight of business: but you will not be disheartened, especially as you will, I hope, more and more see (in the *mercantile* style) that it *answers very well*. You know who could do all things *εν Χριστῷ εὐδυναμενοί*, *Phil. iv. 13*. and there your eyes will be continually directed. Even St. PAUL could not do without that: and *with* that, who cannot do?

I know not what to say about *extra-temporary preaching*. It may on some accounts be desirable and useful: but I dare not encourage it in *young divines*. I never knew an instance of it, but the preacher was careless in his studies, slovenly and incorrect in his discourses; and losing the habit of accurate composing,

posing, could never recover it afterwards. Yet I would by no means desire you to confine yourself entirely to your notes. When a thought strikes you, or something in your sermon seems to strike your hearers, you may add a few sentences, as you find matter arising in your mind: and if you are thoroughly master of your subject, and have a good deal of your sermon, especially the application of it, committed to memory, thus much will be easy, and you will not hesitate and appear at a loss. But suppose you preach at your new church, sermons which you have delivered at *Little Cheverel* half a year ago; not exactly as wrote, but commit the substance, every leading thought, and the texts which you have introduced into them, to memory, and then enlarge *pro re natâ*. Or, you may compose and write out one new sermon every week, and let it be

preached

preached at your churches alternately ; and then on the other part of the day, have at the other church, your plan, texts, and leading thoughts only written down, and discourse to your people from them. So that each place will have a compleat, and a kind of *extemporary* discourse alternately. But then, if you do this as it ought to be done, it will very little lessen your labour : for it will require as much pains in studying your plan, texts, and subordinate thoughts, and putting them down, as in writing a sermon at large. But let me caution you, never to venture without a finished discourse in your pocket, lest any indisposition of your own, or circumstance relating to the congregation, should disqualify you for ready conception and utterance.* I have known so many minis-
ters

* The editor once, and never but once, ventured into the pulpit without a finished discourse in

ters become injudicious and unacceptable by a careless habit of composing, or rather of not composing at all, in their younger days, and in small country places, that I make these concessions, guarded as they are, with fear. The other extreme is best for a young divine to err in. Besides, there is no way by which you will so speedily and effectually increase your fund of theological knowledge, as by accurate composures. Thus you will study your subject carefully, viewing and examining it on every side; consulting all the commentators you may have upon your text and parallel places, and reading what other divines (whose writings you may be possessed of)

in his pocket. The consequence was, that on a neighbouring gentleman's coach coming, unexpectedly, very late to church, it threw him into so great a confusion, as to oblige him to conclude his discourse rather abruptly.

of) have said upon the subject. So that were you to read nothing for a whole week, but what you would read in this method (except history, classics, &c. by way of relaxation) I should commend your diligence, and say, you had kept to the good maxim, *Hoc age.*

I am glad to hear of the encouragement you meet with. How happy are you in having such opportunities of preaching to those, to whom the gospel (in our view of it) is a kind of novelty. Our dissenters, in general, have heard of it, till they nauseate it: so that there is little hope of its doing them any good. This leads so many of our divines to try what philosophy and abstract representations of virtue will do, without the peculiarities of the gospel. But if they do good, it is more than I ever saw or heard of. God is wiser than men. And if his remedies will not do, men's will not; and

and the disease is incurable. However we must go on to try them, and wait on him for success.

I found lately, in the course of my reading, mention made of a Mr. ROWLAND STEDMAN, a native of *Shropshire*, who, in 1662, gave up his living of 300*l.* per annum, at *Oakingham*, *Berkshire*, because he could not comply with the terms then required; who was an excellent preacher, and the author of several practical treatises. Is he an ancestor or relative of your's?*

VOL. I. I contin D I assure

* He was born at *Corfton*, in the parish of *Diddlebury*, in *Shropshire*, 1630; admitted a commoner of *Baliol College*, *Oxford*, March 13, 1647, and the year following removed to *University College*. In 1655, he took his master's degree, and soon afterwards became minister of *Hanwell*, near *Brentford*, *Middlesex*; where continuing till 1660, he removed to *Oakingham*, in *Berkshire*, and from thence was ejected for non-conformity. He was afterwards chaplain to *PHILIP Lord WHARTON*, died at his Lordship's

I assure you I should think such a divine and confessor an honour to my name and family, and I believe you will think it so to your's. — Of *another pious minister* I read, that he found his labours had little effect upon his own parishioners, but much upon his occasional and accidental hearers. Of *another*, that being complained of by a neighbouring clergyman, for drawing away his parishioners on a Sunday, he answered, “ I have preached them here, let him, if he will, preach them back again.” Old Bishop LATIMER told such a complaining divine —

“ Feed

ship's seat at *Woobourne*, near *Beaconsfield*, Bucks, Sept. 14, 1673, and lies buried in the church there. See *Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses*, Vol. II. p. 381. and *Lysons's Environs of London*, Vol. II. p. 554. — The editor believes he was nearly related to his great-grandfather Mr. *John Stedman*, who lived at *Corfton*, and was buried in the church at *Diddlebury*, April 1699, *ætatis sua* 43.

“ Feed your flock better, and then they won’t stray.” Such hints as these, from eminent and experienced ministers, have always a great weight on my mind. In reading the lives of eminent men, you will do well to insert in a pocket-book, or *vade-mecum*, any hints of stories,* facts, or remarks, which you would wish to remember, or would be proper to quote in sermons or conversation. Unless your memory be much better than mine ever was, you will find this necessary.

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I congratulate

* Sometimes he tells these stories, and sayings of others, according as his text invites him; for them also men heed and remember better than exhortations; which though earnest, yet often die with the sermon; especially with country people; which are thick, and heavy, and hard to raise to a point of zeal and fervency, and need a mountain of fire to kindle them; but stories and sayings they will remember.

HERBERT’s *Country Parson.*

I congratulate you on the *approach of Spring*, when every scene will be enlivened around you, and a country village will become a kind of paradise. It gives me pleasure to think what favourable opportunities of usefulness you will have in your rural walks, to see your farmers and shepherds at work, and talking with them and their servants about their occupations, in an easy and natural way, grafting some religious hints upon it, directing them to spiritualize their labours, and rise to God, and Christ, and heaven, by their common occurrences. And while you exhort them in the words of SOLOMON, to "be diligent to know the state of their flocks, and to look well to their herds," (*Prov. xxvii. 23.*) you will, like a good shepherd, take the hint yourself. — May the dews of divine grace be largely diffused into you and your flock, that you may be adorned

adorned with all the beauty of christian graces, and abound in all the fruits of righteousness !

I am your affectionate,

and faithful humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

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LETTER

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

June 10, 1772.

THE death of the old incumbent of *Great-Cheverel*, is an affecting lesson to the laity, but especially to the clergy; which I pray God they may lay seriously to heart. I wish you may be continued in the curacy, provided the new rector should not choose to reside. Fellows of colleges, who have been many years immured in their colleges, are not always the most fit persons to be parish priests; not knowing well how to preach, or converse, or behave to common people; except they have a heart truly serious, and that will make up every other defect in country places.

I am glad you are pleased with
the

the two volumes of CLUBBE's* Tracts, which I designed for your service, and beg your acceptance of them. His sermon before the Sons of the Clergy at *Ipswich*, and the Letter to a Young Clergyman, are very excellent. His tract on Infant Baptism is sensible and clear, and the others are entertaining, and indeed useful; for they expose the folly of many writers, especially on subjects of antiquity, and indeed of some of the clergy, who spend too much of their time in such studies.

I know not what *History of England* to recommend to you. Some are so large, some so short, and some so partial, it is hard to say which is best, or which is good. A general acquaintance with our history is very desirable. But it is of great importance to be acquainted with some periods of it, particularly the reformati-

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* Rector of *Whatfield*, in *Suffolk*.

on, civil wars, and revolution. I know none better than BURNET's *Abridgment of the Reformation*; and his *History of his own Times*. WELWOOD's *Memoirs* is a good abridgment of our history from James I. to King William. I have heard a good character of GOLDSMITH's *History*, but have not seen it. But I would principally recommend to you to get some books of biography; especially the *British Biography*, which is very full and cheap, and the best thing of the kind I have seen. This will give you a good acquaintance with our history in general, with particular persons and their writings, and above all, will furnish you with many little anecdotes and stories to insert in your sermons, which will entertain and edify your hearers. There is a book which I would recommend to you, as extremely useful in this view, called "*The Triumphs of Faith*," printed for Dilly. Price half a crown.

I am

I am reading again BENNET's *Christian Oratory*, I suppose for about the tenth time. I hope you have got that book. I know not a better for any christian, especially divines ; as it contains so much devotion, piety, good sense, christian experience, and great candour, carrying nothing to an extreme.

I am your faithful friend,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. Dr. ADAMS spent two hours with me lately in his way home from *London* and *Oxford*. His behaviour was perfectly candid and obliging. He left your tutor Mr. GRIFFITH, well at *Pembroke College*.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR,

August 19, 1772.

I SHOULD have written to you long ago, had not my great weakness prevented me, owing to which, I was obliged to drop all correspondence, but what I could carry on in short-hand.

I thank you for your very kind and friendly letter, and all the encouragements and consolation it suggests. It is not only a proof of your friendship to me, but an evidence, that "the Lord hath given you the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to them that are weary;"* and in that view it gave me peculiar pleasure. The long continued dry and hot weather we have had, tho' so favourable to

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• Isaiah 1. 4.

the earth, was injurious to me ; weakened my little strength, and quite took away my spirits. I have been in a very languishing state, since the end of *June*. Within a week past I have been considerably revived ; tho' I have, and shall have, returns of my disorder, and my nerves continue in a most shattered condition : nor can I expect they will be much better, till we have cooler weather.—My mind hath indeed been in a gloomy state ; which I doubt not, as your very kind letter suggests, is much owing to my corporal disorder ; but when eternity seems just in view, conscience awakens and alarms ; youthful sins, which have been deeply and daily mourned over before God, appear yet exceeding sinful ; and the sins of a professor and a *minister*, appear peculiarly heinous. A thousand defects and negligences in ministerial work, and especially in the *pastoral care*,

care, appear then *great* sins. You read my writings, and see my outside only; but know not “the plague of my heart,”* the sad remains of corruptions and sensual affections, distract-ed, cold devotions, and little, languid love and zeal. Yet it hath been the main busines of my life to do good, and I think my governing principle, to serve the Lord Christ. Worldly wealth, honour,† pleasure, and applause, I never sought. I have been endeavouring to serve my fellow-crea-tures while I had ability, and have been attempting it in my present state of silence, weakness, and obscurity; and tho’ conscious of innumerable imper- fections,

* 1 Kings viii. 38.

† A degree of Doctor in Divinity had been conferred upon Mr. ORTON many years pre-viously to his decease, but he would never per-mit himself to be addressed by that title, or prefix it to any of his writings.—*Account by KIPPIS*, in the Biograp. Britan. vol. v.

fections, this affords me some comfort. I have sometimes a chearful hope ; at other times it is weak and wavering ; and those fears, which have torment, prevail.* But in the darkest seasons, I keep looking and crying to God for his pardon and help ; that he would discover to me any latent hypocrisy or sin ; and if he seeth it good, dart a ray of light and peace into my soul. I place no dependence upon any works or worthiness of my own, but lie at the foot of the cross, as a humble, penitent believer, and fixing all my dependence there.† — I write these things partly

for

* 1 John iv. 18.

† Sir JOHN HAWKINS, in his Life of Dr. JOHNSON, gives us the following account of that excellent man.—“ In a visit, which I made him, in consequence of a very pressing request to see me, I found him labouring under great dejection of mind. He bade me draw near him, and said he wanted to enter into a serious conversation

with

for your warning, partly for your encouragement; but chiefly that you may the better know how to pray for me.

with me; and, upon my expressing a willingness to join in it, he, with a look that cut me to the heart, told me, that he had the prospect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour. I could not but be astonished at such a declaration, and advised him, as I had done once before, to reflect on the course of his life, and the services he had rendered to the cause of religion and virtue, as well by his example, as his writings; to which he answered, that he had written as a philosopher, but had not lived like one. In the estimation of his offences, he reasoned thus — “ Every man knows his own sins, “ and also, what grace he has resisted. But, to “ those of others, and the circumstances under “ which they were committed, he is a stranger: “ he is, therefore, to look on himself as the “ greatest sinner he knows of.” At the conclusion of this argument, which he strongly enforced, he uttered this passionate exclamation — “ Shall I, who have been a teacher of others, “ myself be a castaway ? ” Life, p. 563.

“ Some-

me. I wish to *know* more clearly (and God can, if he sees good, *show* me) how far the body darkens the prospects of the soul, or how far remaining corruptions and failings occasion anxious fears. I daily pray, “*Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.*” Job x. 2. And I hope, God will not deny a request, which his word and spirit dictate. I rejoice that your bow abides in strength, and that you have any encouragement in your labours. **May the Lord increase it!**

What

“Sometimes persons of a melancholy and fearful temper, who yet have lived in all good conscience, and whose conduct, in every relation, has been singularly good, have fallen into such an opinion of themselves as hath embittered all their comforts, and made their very lives a burden to them. They have thought themselves, what no one else could think them, the vilest of sinners; and have gone mourning all their days, when they have had the highest reason for calm content, and joyful hope.”

What glorious harvest weather! I hope you will preach your people a *Harvest Sermon*. What think you of Isaiah ix. 3. (middle clause) for a text, which plainly refers to the gospel? See ver. 1, 2. The joy of harvest great—reasonable, on account of plenty—good weather—freedom from enemies.—But joy of the gospel greater—better blessings, relating to the soul and eternity—bought and purchased by Christ—freely bestowed, &c.—All should rejoice in such a gospel—especially those who have felt its power. Excuse these hints.

This is the longest letter I have written for some time: and indeed writing at any time, especially now, is fatiguing to me.

I am, dear sir,

your faithful friend,

and humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR,

October 16, 1772.

My long illness this summer threw me so much behind hand with my correspondents, that I have not yet been able to recover that punctuality, which I should be glad to maintain. I bless God I have been in better health and spirits for three weeks past, than for three months before, and indeed am now as well as I ever expect to be. But the wetness of the season is a hindrance to my riding, walking, writing, every thing. My mind is freer from tormenting fears; but either these bad nerves, or something worse, deprive me of those comfortable hopes I wish to enjoy. But the divine Physician, whose regimen is always right, may see it best to

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keep

keep some of his patients *low*. They may not bear a higher diet: probably the health of the soul may be best promoted by it; and then all will be well in the issue.

I rejoice in your encouragement in your *pastoral visits*. You have, I think, gone as far as you prudently can at first. As your intimacy with your people increases, they will be more open in conversation with you, and then you may properly put particular questions to them. For instance: “Do you *pray* in secret? With a form, and what form? or without?” So as to family prayer.—Your method of *lending books*, &c. is very useful, as it will furnish you with some natural questions about their attention and improvement; which will not appear forced and lugged-in, and so not terrify them, nor appear impertinent in you.—It would be well to *pray with families*,

families, wherever you think it can prudently be done; and hints may be dropped in prayer inoffensively, which may shew them their duty. Mr. HENRY saith, "Prayer may preach." And I have often found persons observing and improving such hints, which could not be given in an address to *them* without danger of offence.* But caution is necessary here, not to let them see too plainly what you think of their state. This may be dangerous both ways. Petitions grounded on the treachery of the heart, the frequency and danger of self-deceit, and for divine search, illumination, and guidance, are always proper and useful; except you have reason to believe your

* "I have often (says one) learnt my duty from Mr. ORTON's prayers:" when he had been on a visit at his house, and joined with him in his family worship.—KIPPIS's *Account*.

friends are established christians. Even common appellations, as *thy servant*, *thy handmaid*, may in some cases do harm, as you know, and will know, how prone persons are to catch at any shadow of hope without penitence and faith. *This person*, or *this our friend*, is less dangerous language.—It is good to pray particularly for *children* and *servants* in a family. This pleases and edifies them, and may suggest useful hints to them and their superiors: but to be too particular is wrong.—I think it a very useful way to enquire of the *younger* children, whether they remember the text of the last Sunday's sermon, (as their parents should be desired to teach it them:) and of the *elder* children, whether they remember any thing of the sermon. When they expect such an enquiry, they will be more attentive, and then you may familiarly talk over something of the sermon.

sermon with them, particularly what was most suited to their capacity and circumstances. I assure you, I have often learned much from the answers of little children to such queries ; learned what part of a sermon they best understood, were affected with ; what kind of sentiments or language struck them ; and so knew how better to preach to *children*, that is, to nine parts in ten of every auditory ; for so many are children in understanding.—*To talk over with them any remarkable occurrence* in the parish or neighbourhood, as the death of a child — sudden death — the season of the year — or uncommon phœnomena — may be useful ; or sometimes to give each a text of scripture (always a short one) to remember and think of against the next meeting, and then talk it over with them ; especially a text suited to any particular failing in them, or circumstance of

their family — as against lying, idleness, love of finery, or slovenliness — sleeping at church — or playing on the sabbath ; or suppose once in a year you were to preach a sermon to children, and give notice of it the preceding Sunday.— To have your notes with you in the pulpit, yet to enlarge, as occasion may require, is best. When pious, pertinent thoughts arise, pursue them, as far as you find matter flow easily. *Application* is the life and soul of preaching : warm addresses, according to your hearers' different characters, stations and circumstances, will be useful.— After your pastoral visits or catechising, *keep hints* of what you learn and observe, which may direct the strain or pointing of your publick discourses. Teaching is one of the best ways of learning : and there is in a minister's work, as in matter, action and reaction. His own soul and his people's

people's will thus be reciprocally influenced. — Perhaps nothing is more necessary, than frequently and plainly to caution persons, especially the sick, against *laying an undue stress on the Lord's Supper*, having wrong notions of it, and expecting from it, what it was never designed to produce or convey. I have known some worthy clergymen complain of their great embarrassment in this respect. And as it is very grievous to have any thing like arguing and disputing with the sick and dying, this should often be done in the pulpit and conversation when they are well. But enough of these subjects.

I am truly concerned on account of Dr. STONHOUSE's mournful accounts from *India*, and very tenderly sympathize with him under this severe trial; knowing how much a person of his delicate frame and irritable nerves, must

suffer by so unexpected an event.* But I pray and hope, that God will support him, and enable him still to go on with his Master's work. An accession of *spiritual* children, begotten in Christ Jesus by the gospel preached by him, will be his best relief and cordial under this heavy affliction ; and in the prospect and hope of this, I trust he will persevere. God often calls his ministers to peculiar trials, that he may exhibit them as examples of patience, meekness, serenity, and even chearfulness, and lead them to recommend and enforce their publick exhortations thereby. It is good to have this in our thoughts in our afflicted seasons, and to do honour to our religion and profession, by a resemblance to our divine Master. To his assistance, compassion, and blessing I heartily recommend him.

You

* The death of his eldest son.

You will do well to make MOSHEIM's *Ecclesiastical History*, translated from the Latin, by MACLAINE, familiar to you, as it is I think the best on the subject: and Dr. JORTIN, who was an excellent judge of a book of that kind, commends it as the most honest, impartial, and comprehensive of any he had met with.*

You have my best wishes and prayers for your good success.

I am your affectionate friend, &c.

JOB ORTON.

* MOSHEIM's *Compendium*, says Bp. WARBURTON, is excellent, the method admirable, in short, the only one deserving the name of an Ecclesiastical History. — As a Compendium, the editor prefers Dr GREGORY's *History of the Christian Church from the earliest periods to the present time*; two volumes, octavo, printed for KEARSLEY, Fleet-street.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

DEAR SIR,

IT gave me great pleasure to receive a letter from you with so much *short-hand* in it, as it shewed me you had applied closely to it, and that with a little *daily* care you will soon be master of it. You must make yourself thoroughly acquainted with the prepositions, terminations, and symbolical and arbitrary marks, as well as the meaning of the alphabet. You will find it of signal use to yourself in saving time and labour, and making your correspondence with some of your friends more easy: and for want of it, you are spoiling a good hand, and using yourself to so many abbreviations, that it is not easy to read them.

them. I hope I shall not puzzle you too much with what I now send.

Your story of the good woman at *Great Cheverel* is delightful, and full of instruction. It shews how absurd, ungrounded, uncharitable, and wicked it is, to say of parishes and congregations where the gospel, in our view of it, hath not been preached, “There is no religion there—not one serious person—not one pious soul.” See *John* i. 46—48.

I am sensible, that too many people have strange and dangerous notions of the *Lord's Supper*: and I see not what can be done, but to endeavour to give them juster and better notions of it. It may not be amiss, whenever you administer that ordinance, to have something in your sermon adapted to rectify their mistakes, as well as to warm their hearts, and confirm good resolutions. A collection of texts for this

this purpose may be made in the course of your reading. But I need not say to you, that the subjects of your discourses on these occasions should be peculiarly *evangelical*; something relating to Christ, his undertaking, design, death, love, and the like.

A set of yearly sermons to young people, to parents and children (which you have thoughts of preaching, and of which you ask my advice) may probably have this inconvenience attending it, that in a few years you may be at a loss for fresh materials. It may be done very well for a year or two. But it seems to me a better way to introduce these subjects by preaching upon some scripture histories: as for instance, what is said of *Abraham's* commanding his children and household to keep the way of the Lord; of *Joshua's* resolution to serve the Lord with his house; of *David's* instructions

instructions to his son *Solomon*, and the like; the early piety of *Joseph*, *Obadiah*, *Jabez*, *Solomon*, *Timothy*, and especially our *Lord Jesus Christ*. These histories are striking, and will at once explain and enforce the duties you recommend; and so with regard to all other relative duties.—I see no objection to the specimen you sent me of your discourse on *Christ the pearl of price*, *Matt.* xiii. 45, 46. only let me recommend it to you to be careful, that when you handle a metaphorical subject, you do not strain it too far; but keep as much as possible to the precise idea of the inspired writer. You will observe in the course of your reading, how often metaphors and figures are mingled and confounded; and by some good writers too, for want of keeping one single precise idea always in their mind. You will excuse, I know, these hints. A little habit and practice will make

make it easy to you to avoid such errors. Your *Cheverel* peasants may not perceive them, but a clergyman should strive so to write and speak, as to be intelligible to the plainest ; to give no cause of censure to the judicious, or ill-natured criticks ; and to be acceptable to all.

You observe, that Bishop CLAYTON, in his *Letters to his Nephew*, recommends MARSHALL's Sermons, as preferable to SHERLOCK's and ATTENBURY's for pathos, and for lively and warm applications. Upon seeing this recommendation, I bought the three volumes ; but am much disappointed in them. They are very judicious, and some of them very serious ; the language is neat and elegant : but the main thing which they appear to me to want, is that very thing for which the bishop recommends them. But his ideas of application

cation and mine very widely differ. However, I am reading them with great pleasure, and I hope some benefit; though I should not choose to preach in his strain.

Have you ever seen and read JENKS's *Meditations*?* If you have not, I suppose you may borrow them of Dr. STONHOUSE. They are very serious and excellent things, on a great variety of subjects: almost each of which contains the substance and heads of a sermon, and will furnish excellent materials for your compositions for the pulpit; though his style is none of the best. MERIVALE's *Daily Devotions for the Closet*,† I have, and think them excellent. The author was a most worthy, learned, and pious man,

a native

* In two volumes octavo, printed for RIVINGTON, St. Paul's Church-yard.

† Price two shillings, printed for BUCKLAND, in *Paternoster-Row*.

a native of *Northampton*, and of the same class with me at the academy, and afterwards divinity-tutor at the academy at *Exeter*.—*SANDERCOCK*'s *Sermons*, in two volumes, are lively, judicious, serious, and familiar.

Had you looked into your lexicons for the meaning of the word *chrematistic*, you would have found that it signifies the art of getting and saving money, from *Χρηματα*, money, substance, wealth, &c. *Χρηματιστης* hath a different sense in the new testament, and means, warned of God in a dream. Where you are in doubt about any such words, never rest till you have obtained some knowledge of them. By this method you will increase your stock of learning, and with comparatively little trouble.

I have little to say of myself. I bless God, I am in pretty good spirits, but weak and unfit for any business.

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The late wet and windy weather hath been prejudicial to me, by hindering my riding, and depriving me of comfortable sleep. But I would be thankful that I am able to read, and sometimes to write a little to my friends, and so I hope, am not quite useless in the world. I greatly want a heart to improve solitude and infirmities better, to feel more of the love of God, and submission to him, and better hopes as to futurity. In this view, I doubt not but you will continue your prayers for me. May the great Head of the church increase all your gifts and graces, and make you abundantly useful to all the people committed to your charge!

I am, dear sir,

Your's affectionately,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. November 6, 1772, which reminds me of the day of the year on
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which Dr. DODDRIDGE died. The recollection of which event affects me with deep humility, and at the same time with much thankfulness.—I wish his *Life* may be of use to you. It cost me immense pains, and helped to break my constitution. But I hope it hath done, and will do, some good; though *those* who I think on many accounts, should have paid the greatest attention to it, have regarded it least.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

DEAR SIR,

March 27, 1772.

You have, I presume, had some account from Dr. STONHOUSE of his expedition into *Kent*, and of his reception there. He is now in *London*, and I suppose his time is very much taken up amidst the hurries, visits, and forms of the great city. I envy not his occasional residence there, much less the state of our brethren, who have parishes or congregations in *London*: for they have very little time to command; and, I fear, are so much taken up with avocations, too trifling in themselves, but, considering their situation, necessary to be attended to, that their minds are too much diverted from pastoral duty, and the proper business of their important stations.

The country parish-priests are much more happy, if they understand and love their work ; and have much more agreeable prospects of usefulness among the people committed to their care. And though they do not make so splendid a figure in this world, yet, other things being equal, they will make a much more respectable one in that which is to come.

I am sorry you meet with so much discouragement from your new parishioners. But if you did not expect it, you were too sanguine, and did not sufficiently consider the state of that parish. It was, I suppose, like SOLOMON's field of the slothful, all overgrown with thorns and nettles, the fences broken down, or out of repair, and all the marks of negligence, and its bad consequences appearing in it. Were you to take a farm in that condition, you would not expect to see it become

become fruitful and beautiful all at once, or with the utmost pains you could take, in a few months, or even years. But the minds of sinners are more untractable than a neglected farm. The weeds of sin are so many, and have taken such deep root, that it is not easy to eradicate them, much less to destroy the seeds. It is hard to break up the fallow ground of hearts, which has been long uncultivated. *Hosea x. 12.* But the hand of the diligent will in time do great things, and the blessing of the Lord, which will attend it, (if his diligence extends to prayer, as well as labour) can break through the greatest difficulties. You will, no doubt, study some awful subjects to awaken and convince obstinate sinners; yet not dwell too much upon these, but try to draw them at times with the “cords of love,” and the endearing, striking mo-

tives of a glorious gospel. When you hear of any of them behaving ill, you will take an opportunity of talking privately to them. But then, I think it will be best not to enter too largely upon their particular sins and faults, (else they will probably be displeased) but represent to them in general the evil of sin, the temporal, spiritual, and eternal misery, which men are bringing upon themselves and their children by vicious courses; and put into their hands some *little tract* against the vice which they are guilty of, or the whole, or part, of Dr. STONHOUSE's *Admonitions against swearing, sabbath-breaking, and drunkenness.** If you have any serious, judicious christians in either of your parishes, who are acquainted with those persons who give you

* Price one penny, or 6s. an hundred. This little tract is in the catalogue of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

you so much concern, endeavour to prevail upon them to talk a little seriously to them at proper times: for in many cases, a hint of advice given by one of the laity hath more effect, and is better received, than when it comes from a clergyman; as they will think the latter is only acting *ex officio*, and that his exhortation doth not so much proceed from a real concern for their reformation and happiness.— You will, I doubt not, consider that your case is the very case, in some degree, of *every* faithful minister of Jesus Christ. It was the case of the holy apostles (2 Cor. xii. 20, 21,) and was the case of their Lord and ours himself. And though it shews a right disposition, when a minister's heart is grieved and humbled in such circumstances, yet he should not be disengaged, but proceed with so much the

more vigour in his work, comforting himself with this thought, that God may at length awaken the most careless, and humble the most obstinate sinners; or that something we say to them may stick by them, and produce some good effect hereafter, perhaps when we are removed to another station or another world; that others receive benefit by our labours, that all are not disobedient to the word and unfruitful under our ministry; and that we shall be a sweet savour to God, accepted and approved of him, in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved; 2 Cor. ii. 15. and that God will reward his ministers in proportion to their pains and diligence, and not their success. In the mean time, such events are of use to ministers themselves, to humble them, make them more watchful and zealous, and more earnest

earnest in prayer for all-conquering grace.*

I am now reading the works of Mr. WILLIAM PERKINS, an eminent

tutor

* Mr. ORTON once wrote to an eminent divine of the established church in the following manner.—“ You say you do no good by preaching.”—This is talking weakly; I had almost used a harder word. Should you not be chided for it?—“ Why do you leave off preaching?” said old bishop LATIMER to a complainer like you. He answered, “ Because I do no good, my Lord.” The bishop replied, “ That, brother, is a naughty, a very naughty reason.”— You do not know what good you have done, are doing, may yet do, and even after you are dead. No good man preaches, I am confident, without doing some good, and more than he knows of, or will know of, till the great discovering day. To have done our best is moral merit; and God will graciously accept and reward it. What great good did our Master himself do? “ Who hath believed his report?” Isaiah liii. 1.— Who would have thought that *you* should ever have talked of doing no good by preaching, when God hath done you

so

tutor and divine at *Cambridge* in Queen *ELIZABETH*'s reign. They are three volumes in folio, and I have got thro' one of them. What leads me more particularly to read him was, that his elder brother was one of my ancestors, from whom I am in a direct line, by my mother's side, descended. I think him an excellent writer; his style is the best of any of that age, or the next, and many passages in his writings are equal to those of the best writers in modern times. He is judicious,

so much honour already in your clerical character? I am ashamed of you; and almost angry with you. Labour more, and pray more still. "If the iron be blunt, as *SOLomon* says, then put to more strength." *Eccles. x. 10.* If you begin to be lukewarm, whatever your motive is, it cannot be a good one.—I am not clear, that I ever did much *lasting* good in my life; yet I do not repent my attempts. I am humbled and ashamed daily, that they were not more and better. Remember, that *preaching* is of God's own appointment."

dicious, clear, full of matter, and deep christian experience. He wrote all his works with his *left* hand, being lame of his *right*, and died about forty-four. I could wish *all* ministers, especially *young* ones, would read him, as they would find large materials for composition. He hath some tracts against the papists; appears to have been a pretty high calvinist, but he hath many admirable things in *practical* divinity. His works are little known in *England*, but they are still in estimation in *Germany*, many of them being written in elegant latin, and others translated into german. Some account of his life may be seen in CLARK's *Lives of Eminent Men*. He was esteemed a puritan, and met with some difficulties on that account.*—As a specimen

* Mr. GRANGER in his *Biographical History* says—“ he was deprived by archbishop WHITGIFT for being a puritan. But his great learning,

men of PERKINS's manner, I send you the following quotations. Speaking of St. PAUL's labouring in vain, he adds, " It may be demanded, what must be done, when the labours of our calling are in vain? *Answer.* " We must follow the command and calling of God, whether we have good success or no, and whatever comes of it. Though PAUL feared his labour was vain, yet still he laboured. When PETER had laboured all night and caught nothing, at the command of Christ he saith, " At thy word will I cast out my net. " And thus to do, whatever follows, is true wisdom, and the fear of God. " For it must suffice us, that the work we take in hand is pleasing to God, and though it should be in vain

ing, worth and influence, made the high party ashamed and afraid to proceed to any violent measures with him."

“ vain with respect to men, it is not
“ so before God. This every man
“ must remember in his place and
“ calling, for the establishment of his
“ mind against all events.

“ Ministers are to temper their
“ gifts and speech to the condition of
“ their hearers. The *Corinthians* were
“ babes in Christ, and PAUL fed them
“ with milk. To the Jews he be-
“ came a Jew, &c. For this cause,
“ it were to be wished that *catechising*
“ were more used than it is by our
“ ministers: for our people are for
“ the most part rude and uninstructed.
“ A sermon to such persons is like a
“ great loaf set before a child. It is
“ no disgrace for learned ministers in
“ a plain and familiar manner to *cate-*
“ *chise*. This is to lay the foundati-
“ on, without which, all labour in
“ building is vain. In much hearing
“ they learn little, because they know
“ not

“ not the grounds of doctrine, that
“ are usual in all sermons. It is a
“ fault in many, that they love to
“ hear sermons which are beyond
“ their reach, in which they stand and
“ wonder at the preacher, and *plain*
“ preaching is little respected of such.”

—You will judge of his style and manner by these quotations. I have lately found in his works, an analysis and harmony of the whole Bible for the use of students at *Cambridge*.

I think I have now paid you in your own coin, and filled my paper to the utmost. If any thing be acceptable and useful to you in its contents, I shall be glad. I am thankful for your prayers, which are mutual. Think of me, as laid aside from publick work, and almost useless; and learn from it to work while it is day, before disability comes, or the night, when

when no man can work. And may God work effectually in you, with you, and by you !

I am your sincere
and affectionate friend,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER

LETTER X.

DEAR SIR,

April 17, 1773.

LATELY reading CHAUCER's *Character of a good Parson*, as published by DRYDEN, and recollecting some things in your last letter about your method of preaching, induces me to transcribe the following lines, and send them to you.

He bore his great commission in his look,
But sweetly tempered awe ; and soften'd all he
spoke.

He preach'd the joys of heav'n and pains of hell ;
And warn'd the sinner with becoming zeal ;
But on eternal mercy lov'd to dwell.

He taught the gospel rather than the law ;
And forc'd himself to drive ; but lov'd to draw.
For fear but frightens minds ; but love, like heat,
Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her native seat.
To threats, the stubborn sinner oft is hard :
Wrapt in his crimes, against the storm prepar'd ;
But, when the milder beams of mercy play,
He melts, and throws his cumbrous cloak away.

Lightnings

Lightnings and thunder, (heaven's artillery)
As harbingers before th' Almighty fly ;
Those, but proclaim his stile, and disappear ;
The stiller found succeeds ; and God is there.

There is much truth and weight in these lines, and my own experience confirms the propriety and importance of attending to them.

I am glad to find, that you preach to large congregations. But it is not easy to know what good is done by our preaching. If we had not ground to hope, that more good is done, than appears in general, it would be very discouraging. But great modesty, diffidence, or some other principle, prevents our people from letting us know, how they like our sermons, and what good they get by them. Besides, we are sowing seed, which may seem lost, but may only lie dormant for a while, yet may grow and spring up and bear fruit hereafter, perhaps

some years hence, perhaps not till we are dead. I am glad you do not perplex yourself on this head, as indeed you should not; but while you endeavour to do your duty faithfully, leave the event to God. Yet, as it is very desirable to know what succeeds attends our labours, every prudent method should be taken to know it. This is indeed a very nice point. One cannot make a direct enquiry, whether our services are useful, or even acceptable, without appearing vain, and to court applause. Yet perhaps it may be proper to introduce in your visits, some conversation upon the subject of your last sermon, and to remind the people of it. This may be done without any breach of modesty, and may lead them to open their hearts freely on the subject; and thus we may judge how far they understood and relished what was said;

and

and whether they were the better for it. And by this means, we may preach over the same truths to particular persons or families in private, perhaps with more force and success than in the pulpit. Among the poor and plain people, you may be quite free and open on this head, and may ask them whether they understood such and such a subject. They will not suspect you of vanity, or any low ends; tho' probably some of the higher ranks might, among whom vanity is so prevalent. Here wisdom is profitable to direct, and a person must judge by the tempers and characters of those about him.

I was glad to hear of Dr. STONHOUSE's safe arrival at *Teeson*, after so perilous a journey. I almost envy him the company of Mrs. BOUVERIE and her agreeable family. Has he

told you how he held a conventicle at her house on the Sunday evening, where some well-disposed persons in the neighbourhood were invited to hear him read a sermon? This was in character — being “ instant in season and out of season.” I am often comforted by Rom. xi. 2. 4. God hath many *hidden ones*, even among the great as well as the small.

The Book of Devotions, which you saw at my house, was published by WILLIAM AUSTIN, Esq. of *Lincoln's Inn*, who was a papist in CHARLES the First's time. You will see his name and a letter to him, in HOWELL'S *Familiar Letters*,* and some account of him in GRANGER'S *Biographical History*. It was reformed and purged from the popish tenets by DR. HICKES, and afterwards by MR. DORRINGTON; and great use hath been made

* Book i. sect. v. letter xiii.

made of it by many other devotional writers. It contains such noble and sublime strains of devotion, as, I think, are not to be met with any where but in the Bible. So devout may a papist be. He wrote some other pieces, and died about the year 1638.

Reading lately in one of my old favourite books, (BOLTON,*) I found in it this remark: That St. PAUL, addressing himself to the *churches*,

G 3

wishes

* Character of BOLTON by Dr. DODDRIDGE. — “BOLTON had been a notorious sinner: reclaimed by great work of terror: therefore excellent both for conviction and consolation. His style rather inclining to bombast; yet many expressions truly great and magnificent: the beauties of imagination especially apparent in his *Four Last Things*. But his most useful treatises are his *Directions for comfortably walking with God*; and his *Instructions for comforting afflicted consciences*. There we have the traces of a soul most intimately acquainted with God.” — M.S.

wishes them, “ grace and peace from God and our Lord Jesus Christ :” but to **TIMOTHY** and **TITUS**, who were young divines, he wishes *them*, “ grace, *mercy*, and peace ;” intimating how much they of all men, stood in need of divine *mercy*, on account of the very important office they sustained, and the duties incumbent on ministers. It is a very useful hint, and deserves serious consideration. **BOLTON** was a fellow of *Brazen-Nose* college, *Oxford*; a divine of the church of *England*, and of great loyalty. His writings are very valuable, but sell now very cheap. I gave eighteen pence for his works, and found them a good bargain. — I am always glad to hear from you, and am,

Your affectionate servant,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR,

August 24, 1773.

I WAS very glad to hear of your safe arrival at *Cheverel*, and of the agreeable circumstances which attended your return to it. — The kindness of Providence in *preserving us in our journeys*, and guarding us in our going-out and coming-in, demands a very serious and grateful acknowledgment, and lays us under fresh obligations to be active in the service of the bountiful and gracious preserver of men. I need not inform you, that there is a wide difference between the formal acknowledgment of the divine care, which is often found even in the worst of men, and that lively gratitude, and quick sense of obligation, which I fear is not often found in the hearts

of good men. We are too prone to forget *common* mercies. It is therefore desirable, after a long and various journey, seriously to recollect the several stages, circumstances, and occurrences of it, that we may be particular in our thanksgivings, and more active and zealous in serving our gracious protector.—When I was in my better days, I used to spend about one month in a year in visiting my relations in *Warwickshire* and *Northamptonshire*, being seldom from home at any other time.* The Sunday after my return, I generally preached upon some subject, that led me to take notice of the circumstances through which I had passed; and I found these discourses were peculiarly agreeable to my people, and were perhaps as useful as any I preached. As a specimen, I recollect having preached on those occasions

* Mr. ORTON was never in *London* in his life.

fions from these texts, Psalm xxxv. 10.
(former part) Psalm xxxvii. 27. xci.
ii. cxvi. 9. Proverbs xxvii. 8. against
unnecessary journies and visits.* Isaiah
xliii. 2. Daniel v. 23. Acts v. 20.
xxvi. 22. xxviii. 15. (latter part)
Rom. i. 11. xv. 29. xv. 32. 2 Cor.
vii. 3. xii. 21. Phil. i. 22. 1 Theff.
iii. 8. 3 Epist. of John iv. 4. Ibid 6.
You will excuse my mentioning these
texts, as you may perhaps think it
worth your while, if Providence spare
your life, to handle some of them on
such occasions.

I presume, that after you have
considered the *mercies* of your late
journey, you have been carefully re-
viewing the *expences* of it. And unless
you have been more frugal than I used

* This sermon is printed in his two volumes
of Discourses on Practical Subjects. Price six
shillings. See vol. II. Dis. 2.

to be, have found the expence hath been great ; and some articles have been incurred, which ought to have been avoided. Excuse me, my dear sir, if I should have any fears about you, lest you should contract an habit of not calculating, or forgetting, what it will cost you to gratify the feelings of good-nature, to indulge your fancy, or to please your relations and friends. And let me beseech you, to labour this point with all your might, to keep exact accounts of all your expences, especially to mark all superfluous and unnecessary articles, and to keep a strict guard upon your conduct and inclination. It will require, in a person of your temper, no little self-denial to do this, and to act as such a calculation and recollection will suggest to you that you should have acted. I have known instances among your clergy and ours, of those, who have, by thought-

thoughtlessness and want of keeping accounts, exposed themselves, their profession, and function, to contempt, and thereby greatly lessened their esteem and usefulness. Shall I mention to you a recent instance of this kind, which presented itself to me but the last week? Our good friend Mr. ROBINS, of *Westbromwich*, came here to represent the case of a dissenting minister of his acquaintance, who hath always been an easy tempered, thoughtless man, who had not courage and self-denial enough to say, "NO, I cannot afford it," when he should, and might justly and honourably, have said it. He hath a wife, many small children, and is so deeply in debt, though he hath a pretty good salary, that unless his friends can help him, he must go to gaol, lose his place, salary, and usefulness, and his wife and children come to the parish. I hope

Mr.

Mr. R. will get him money sufficient to set him free from his present difficulties. But, I fear, though he promises very fair, that he is one of that sort, of whom SOLOMON says, *If thou help him, thou must do it yet again*, Prov. xix. 19. There needs no application of this melancholy story, but the old adage, “ Happy is he, whom other men’s harms do make to beware.” I know you will excuse these hints from a friend, who interests himself sincerely and tenderly in all that concerns you, and would not have your good to be evil spoken of, or your usefulness any way lessened. I hope, therefore, you will particularly attend to that part of the good man’s character, that *he guides his affairs with discretion*, Psalm cxii. 5.* and *gives no occasion to the adversary*

* See *Psalm cxii. 5.* with the version of Dr. BRADY and Mr. TATE, which gives a beautiful

versary to speak reproachfully. 1 Tim.
v. 14.*

One of my young friends, who
hath been at *Oxford*, at the installa-
tion

ful sense to that text ; though the Common
Prayer-Book version is very instructive : “ He
will guide his *words* with discretion.”

His lib’ral favours he extends ;
To some he gives, to others lends :
Yet what his charity impairs,
He saves by prudence in affairs.

Tate and Brady.

* The first virtue which appears to me of importance (says Mr. PALEY) is *frugality*. If there be a situation in the world in which profusion is without excuse, it is that of a young clergyman who has little beside his profession to depend upon for his support. It is folly—it is ruin—Folly ; for whether it aim at luxury, or show, it must fall miserably short of its design. In these competitions we are outdone by every rival. The provision which clergymen meet with upon their entrance into the church is adequate in most cases to the wants and decencies of their situation, but to nothing more — To pretend to
more,

tion of Lord NORTH as chancellor of that university, spent a day or two with me last week, and shewed me a very great curiosity. It is a circular letter addressed to the clergy by one Dr. TRUSLER, who lives in *London* ; con-

more, is to set up our poverty not only as the subject of constant observation, but as a laughing-stock to every observer. Profusion is ruin : for it ends, and soon too, in debt, in injustice, and insolvency. You well know how meanly, in the country more especially, every man is thought of who cannot pay his credit ; in what terms he is spoken of — in what light he is viewed, what a deduction this is from his good qualities, what an aggravation of his bad ones — what insults he is exposed to from his creditors, what contempt from all. Nor is this judgment far amiss. Let him not speak of honesty, who is daily practising deceit ; for every man who is not paid is deceived. Let him not talk of liberality, who puts it out of his power to perform one act of it. — Let him not boast of spirit, of honour, of independence, who fears the face of his creditors, and who meets a creditor in every street. There is

containing proposals to furnish them with sermons from our best divines, and some never published nor preached, at one shilling for each sermon, engraven on copper-plates, that they may look like a manuscript, and that persons,

is no meanness in frugality; the meanness is in those shifts and expedients, to which extravagance is sure to bring men. Profusion is a very equivocal proof of generosity. The proper distinction is not between him who spends and him who saves; for they may be equally selfish; but between him who spends upon himself, and him who spends upon others. When I extol frugality, it is not to praise that minute parsimony which serves for little but to vex ourselves and teize those about us; but to persuade you to *economy upon a plan*, and that plan deliberately adjusted to your circumstances and expectations. Set out with it, and it is easy; to retrieve, out of a small income, is not impossible. Frugality in this sense, we preach not only as an article of prudence, but a lesson of virtue. Of this frugality it has been truly said, that it is the parent of liberty, of independence, of generosity.

Advice addressed to the Young Clergy.

persons, who can see the preacher's notes from the gallery, may suppose them to be his own hand-writing. This is a new and fine contrivance, and what a clergyman (who wants no such helps) properly calls, "An help for the lame and the lazy." *

I am glad you have been reading over again ARCHBISHOP SECKER's Sermons; which are very excellent, tho' his style is none of the best. They

are

* But hark — the Doctor's voice —
He hails the clergy; and defying shame,
Announces to the world his own and theirs.
He grinds divinity of other days
Down into modern use; transforms old print
To zig-zag manuscript, and cheats the eyes
Of gall'ry critics by a thousand arts.—
Are there who purchase of the Doctor's ware?
Oh name it not in Gath! — it cannot be,
That grave and learned Clerks should need such aid.
He doubtless is in sport, and does but droll,
Assuming thus a rank unknown before,
Grand caterer and dry-nurse of the Church.

COWPER'S Task.

are much more evangelical than the sermons of most of the clergy; and from them you may collect many excellent materials for your compositions. He retained a good deal of the spirit which he imbibed at *Tewkesbury*; where he received a considerable part of his education under Mr. JONES, who was a very able tutor.

Since I began this letter, Dr. JOHNSTONE,* who has been at *Hagley* some days, informs me, that he thinks Lord LYTTELTON can live but a very short time. I do not find that he has any apparent bad disorder, but is sinking under the weight of domestic sorrows. So little can his wealth, honour, title, palace, park, literary reputation, and high character throughout *Europe* support him under his afflictions. What a melancholy proof

• An eminent physician, late of *Kidderminster*, now of *Worcester*.

of the truth of SOLOMON's observation, that *all is vanity.**

I have lately sent a small tract to the pres^s, containing *Three Discourses on Christian Zeal*;† which I shall beg your acceptance of as soon as they are published. I shall be thankful if Providence makes me an instrument of doing good in this way, while I am disabled from appearing in the pulpit. I heartily wish you success in all your pious and benevolent attempts to do good, and am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend

and humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

P. S.

* His Lordship died the next day.

† At a time when many valuable treatises had been published in defence of toleration and liberty, Mr. ORTON thought there was great room to complain of the want of zeal for the support & advancement

P. S. The young Lady's verses upon Dr. STONHOUSE, are elegant and pretty :* but he will not plume himself upon them. Allowance must be made for the *poetica licentia*. The compliments of our friends do us no harm, but good, when we improve them by vigorous endeavours *to be* what they suggest we *already* are.

H 2 LETTER

advancement of real practical religion, and for the good of souls. To revive, therefore, this zeal, was the object of these Discourses.—
KIPPIS's Account.

* *Epître au Dr. STONHOUSE,
sur les Sermons de Mr. SAURIN.*

Ces divines ardeurs, cette sainte éloquence,
Ces sublimes pensées, ces conceptions immenses,
Ces effors évangéliques, cette humilité profonde,
Cette connoissance unie à ce mépris du monde,
Cet horreur du vice, cet amour de la vertu,
Cette extrême soumission à la volonté de Dieu,
Cette heureuse indifférence pour un monde incertain,
Cette compassion pour les maux du genre humain,
Cet amour, et cette crainte de l'éternel Créateur,
Cette parfaite espérance dans le sang du Rédempteur;
Enfin, ces grandes idées — ce langage divin —
Qui charme, qui enlève, qui transporte en Saurin,
J'admiré

LETTER XII.

DEAR SIR,

I AM very glad to hear that you are come to a resolution to have nothing to do with Mr. * * * * in the way

J'admire en le lisant ces beautés éclatantes
En t'ecoutant, Docteur, les memes beautés m'en-
chantent,
Semblable au prophète qui, la Sainte Ecriture dit,
Laisse * à son successeur son manteau & son esprit.

H. M.

* 2 KINGS, ii. 13.

THUS TRANSLATED.

That warmth divine, that holy eloquence,
Those thoughts sublime, conceptions so immense,
That deep humility, —
That knowledge and contempt of earthly things,
That dread of vice, of virtue such a love,
That true submission to the will above,
That calm indiff'rence for this changing scene,
That pity for the woes of mortal men,
That love and fear of the eternal Good,
That perfect hope in the Redeemer's blood,

Those

way of correspondence or intimacy. And I hope you will extend your resolution to all men of that sort, be they ever so pious and zealous. Serious young men, struck with the appearances of piety and zeal, are not sufficiently cautious of those in whom they see them; enter into acquaintance and correspondence with them too soon, and too closely, and thereby suffer many inconveniences. “ Beware of men,”* is a good caution in itself, and it is our Master’s too. My *reason* for this advice is plain.—You are not likely to do Mr. * * * * any good. There is no mending *wrong heads.*

H 3

Those great ideas, language so divine,
Which charms, exalts, transports us in SAURIN:
In reading *Him*, these beauties still appear,
In hearing *Thee*, these beauties charm mine ear;
Like to that Prophet, who the scriptures say,
His cloak and spirit left, then wing’d to heav’n his
way.

* Matt. x. 17.

heads, especially when they are influenced by what they think a zeal for God, and imagine, that their good intentions will justify, and even sanctify, all their imprudence and irregularities. You never can make him see that he is acting wrong and imprudently. You may *confute* such men, but you can never *convince* them. — *Another* substantial reason, why you should decline all correspondence with him is, that you will be likely to be a *sufferer* by him. Not that I suppose he will corrupt you, or lead you into any of his irregularities; but these sort of divines will never be easy, except those, who they think are pious, will join in their measures and approve them. If you join in them, you hurt your own credit and usefulness, and the peace of your own mind; and your name and example will be considered and quoted as a sanction for

for all their irregularities. If you do *not* join in them, they will censure and misrepresent you, yea, and treat you worse than they would a mere formalist. I have seen many instances, and felt some of the effects of this kind of zeal, though it no way hurt me. Several preachers and others of this stamp, with whom I had not the least acquaintance, and never saw till I came to this town, used to call upon me, supposing me, I imagine, according to their ideas, to be found in the faith, and a well-wisher to their designs. But when they found I would not run all their lengths, and discouraged their proceedings, (especially their rash and uncharitable way of speaking and judging of *others*, particularly their censures of *all* the clergy, who were not *Calvinists*, however pious, worthy and useful) they began to think *evil* of me, and now to my

H. 4 great

great satisfaction, I see none of them. I shall not forget the advice which a venerable old man of *Northampton*, with his point-collar-band, once gave me concerning such persons, “Neither bless them at all, nor curse them at all.”*

Mr. **, the rector of **, your friend’s acquaintance, and whom he so much admires, is undoubtedly a man of good sense and abilities; but he appears to me to think these things have nothing to do with religion. I once saw one of his sermons, in which were some good and striking remarks, but little or no judgement. The subject of it was, concerning the *influences of the Holy Spirit*: but he quoted a variety of texts at random, most

* “If such preachers do good, I shall rejoice, and say of them, as MR. PHILIP HENRY did of LAMBERT’s soldiers, “Lord, own them, if they truly own thee.”—*Life*, p. 73.

most of them only applicable to the *Apostles*, as a slight attention to the context would have shewn him; but he applied them *without distinction* to all *true christians*; and from thence, he drew many absurd consequences, and injudicious hearers might have drawn a great many more.

I cannot think Mr. * * *, (the other clergyman you speak of) at all justified in his excursion to B * *, because he thinks the proper minister of that parish is negligent in the discharge of his duty. If that were a reason for transgressing all rule and order, it would hold good in so many cases, as would produce universal confusion and disorder. *Another* clergyman may think it his duty to go into neighbouring parishes to preach against the *methodists*, or those that are so called. *Another* might go and preach against the *Athanasian creed*, or some other parts and passages of the *liturgy*, as several of them

them have lately and warmly written against them. And what disturbance, uneasiness and mischief would be the consequence of such a conduct. If it is vindicable in Mr. * * *'s case, it is vindicable in others, and all parish-order and regularity would be at an end. Even St. PAUL himself, with all his apostolic authority and endowments, would not go into *another man's line*. See 2 Cor. x. 12, to the end of the chapter. Where you may see, what St. PAUL was, and what Mr. * * * and every wise clergyman ought to be. God is the God of order, and not of confusion* in all the churches of the saints: and it is our rule to do all things decently and in order.

My *Book of Sermon-Plans*, which you desire an account of, was kept

* *Ἄκαταγασίας*. Examine the emphasis of that word: men who will not keep order, place, rank, &c.

Mr. ORTON.

without much order. Having procured a proper book for the purpose, I divided each page of it into two columns. When any text of scripture struck me, which I thought it necessary to preach upon, I wrote it at the top of the page, between two red lines, and left the whole of that column, to add a division, thoughts, texts, anecdotes, &c. that occurred in thinking of it, and in the course of my reading. And then, when I was at a loss for a text, I had recourse to this book. In reading practical writers, especially Mr. HENRY's Expositions, I found many texts, and plans upon them, which I inserted there; and I added a reference to the authors, if the books were my own, where I might find some illustration of them: if the book belonged to some other person, I then transcribed the hints into the Book of Plans.—The remarks in the Bible, which

which you saw lie upon my desk, were only hints of different interpretations, or the true sense. I also marked the texts I had preached upon, in the margin thus—No. 1468—opposite to *Acts* viii. 39. This number corresponded with the same at the beginning of the sermon, so that I could readily turn to it.

I was much concerned to hear of the death of Mr. LOVE,* Dr. STONHOUSE's curate at *Bristol*; which is a great and irreparable loss to the doctor and to the church, as he was an admirable preacher. Considering his truly serious, and at the same time his rational and catholic disposition, his removal,

* Mr. LOVE was a fellow of *Bristol College*, *Oxford*, master of arts, and one of the minor canons of *Bristol* cathedral. He was curate to Dr. STONHOUSE for some years, when he was *Lecturer of All Saints in Bristol*, and died Oct. 18, 1773, aged 29.

removal, especially in the morning of his days, is very much to be regretted. The doctor is deeply affected with the event.* What a different figure will such a man make in the other world to those clergymen, who may fill up some of the higher offices of

the

* Doctor STONHOUSE made a collection from a few friends, and erected a very elegant monument to his memory, in the cathedral at *Bristol*, and prevailed with Miss HANNAH MORSE to write the following epitaph.

When *wortbleſſeſ* grandeur fills th' embellish'd Urn,
No poignant grief attends the sable Bier;
But when *diftiñgiſt'd* Excellence we mourn,
Deep is the Sorrow, genuine the Tear.

Stranger! should'st thou approach this awful Shrine,
The merit of the honour'd Dead to seek,
The Friend, the Son, the Christian, the Divine,
Let those, who knew Him, those, who lov'd Him,
speak.

Oh! let them in some Pause of Anguish say
What Zeal inspir'd, what Faith enlarg'd his Breast;
How soon th' unfetter'd Spirit wing'd it's Way
From Earth to Heaven, from blessing to be bleſſt.

the church ; who, perhaps, with much learned lumber in their heads, neglect their duty, devote themselves to luxury and dissipation, and take pains to lessen the credit, influence, and usefulness of those, who make it the labour and end of their lives to save themselves and those that hear them.*

I desire to bless God, that my spirits have been tolerably good for some weeks past, though not without some depressing intervals. I am seldom free from pain, but I would be thankful that it is not violent. May God enable you to improve health and vigour while it continues, that you may have comfortable reflections and agreeable prospects, when the days of darkness

* I am sorry to say it, the more a man doth his duty, and the greater pattern he is of study and application, the more he reproaches the idleness and inattention of his brethren, and consequently the more enemies he creates.

Bp. CLAYTON's *Letter to a Young Clergyman.*

darkness come upon you, which may be many. Continue your good wishes and prayers for, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend

and faithful servant,

JOB ORTON.

November 5, 1773.—You say, you heard Mr. * speak rather contemptuously of the fifth of November, calling it a state-day. But as it commemorates our deliverance from popery and slavery, it is a day much to be remembered by all true protestants, in all generations; and I am sorry so little regard is paid to it.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

DEAR SIR,

December 28, 1773.

It gives me pleasure to find that Dr. STONHOUSE's *Prayers*,* and his little *Tract on the Sacrament*,† meet with such encouragement, and I hope they will do much good. I wish by your publick and private addresses, you may be able to lead your parishioners and neighbours to the daily serious use of the Prayers. And as the Dr. hath sent some of them for you to distribute to every house in his parish,

* Prayers for the use of private Persons, Families, Children, and Servants. The twelfth edition, price Four-pence. This book is in the Society's Catalogue for promoting Christian Knowledge.

† A Short Explanation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The eighth edition, price Three-pence.

parish, it will afford you a favourable opportunity, when you give them the books, of talking seriously and closely to them on the subject; and in your future visits of renewing the discourse, by inquiring what use they have made of them. But there is danger of their resting in the mere form, the *opus operatum*, just in reading the prayers, without due seriousness and solemnity, and taking pains to impress the sentiments, and excite the desires they contain, in the heart. I fear, we all fail in this respect, and whether we pray *with*, or *without*, a book, we do not feel the good sentiments we utter, nor warmly desire the blessings we ask.* At least I find it so with myself,

VOL. I. I and

* Consider well each petition as you offer it up; and if you have not been sufficiently attentive to it, repeat it again and again, till your heart accompanies the words. See, Dr. STONHOUSE's Every Man's Assistant, page 181. Second edition, price Three Shillings.

and fear it is so with others, else I think their prayers would have a visibly better effect on their tempers and lives, as all sincere prayers are certainly adapted to have, as well as to engage divine assistance. I hope you will find the good effect of your addresses to your people on this subject. It affords me great pleasure to hear of the interest you have in their esteem and affection. No good can be done by a minister, till that point is in some measure gained, and then, he may hope to draw them with the cords of love, Hos. xi. 4. It is not to be expected in the nature of things, that men should become quite good all at once. Various methods must be tried, and long patience exercised; especially with those who are grossly ignorant, or have indulged themselves in long habits of sin, negligence, or formality. You see how your farmers

ers manage the ground, which they till ; what various methods they take, suited to the different soils — what repeated trials — how long they wait. This will both instruct and encourage you in your *spiritual husbandry*. And you need not be informed, who gives both the common and spiritual farmer the increase. But after all, there is very little hope of doing any good upon old sinners, especially formalists.* You will therefore bend your principal attention to the *rising generation*, where you will find the heart more impressionable. Be prudently familiar with them. Give them a short hint whenever you see them in an easy, pleasant path, without the formality of a solemn address. I know by experience, that *such hints* will often abide and do good, while a direct, long, though *serious address*, will not be regarded. You

* Jer. xiii. 23.

will be more likely to be useful to them, as being young yourself. For *young* people are ready to suppose, that *aged* ministers warn and caution them against many indulgencies and follies, because they are grown past a capacity of relishing them *themselves*. This makes it very desirable that *young* divines should take particular pains *with youth*. It will require some care and prudence to keep up the dignity of your station and character amidst such methods of addressing to youth. But it requires less in your situation, than if you had young gentlemen and ladies to deal with. You will never forget the exhortation, “ Feed my lambs.” John xxi. 15.

I am obliged to you for your extract from the preface to ORR’s Sermons.* It shews an excellent spirit,

* The passage referred to above is as follows.
—“ As

spirit, and very much suits my own case. Whether I have been the instrument of much good I know not. I have not seen those good effects of

I 3

my

— “As the Author hath now got into a period of life, and state of health, which will not permit of his being much more useful, nor probably of his continuing much longer in the present scene ; he thanketh God, that under increasing infirmities of body, and an apprehension of his approaching dissolution, he possesseth his soul in patience and serenity, and hath the most sincere consolation and joy, from a reflection on his having laboured, for by far the greater part of his life, with at least an honest zeal and assiduity, in the service of religion. He cannot, indeed, flatter himself with the thought of having been actually the author of much good, by all his pains and diligence ; but of a hearty good-will to the best of causes, and of well-meant endeavours to have served and promoted it, he is fully conscious. And upon this foundation, notwithstanding his defects and failings, of which he is very sensible, and which are the matter of his unfeigned humiliation and mourning, he presumeth to look up, with an humble hope, to the

my ministry, which some ministers have had, at least in the conversion of sinners. There were *few*, if *any*, of my congregation, who were profligate and abandoned; and whose conversion, when that happens, is very remarkable, and engages much attention. I hope many aged persons have been edified by my services, and not a few young people trained up in sentiments of wisdom and piety; who are now useful in their families and stations, and ornaments to religion. Indeed, I lay very little stress upon what some divines call *Conversions*.* I have seen

so

the supreme judge of his conduct, and arbiter of his fate; waiting for his mercy, through Jesus Christ, unto eternal life. *Amen.*" Preface to the Sermons of the late Rev. JOHN ORR, D. D. Archdeacon of Ferns, in 2 vols: prepared for the press by the author: printed for CADELL, 1772.

* The thirteenth letter (says Dr. KIPPIS) contains some admirable remarks on religious conversions.—*Account.*

so many instances of their coming to nothing; or, that their converts have only been converted from the sins of men to the sins of devils, from drunkenness and debauchery to spiritual pride, bitterness, and uncharitableness; and this I cannot call a saving change. I see little alteration for the better in the conduct of *many*, who have been *said* to be converted. I am cautious of calling any thing by that name, where there is not a regular, consistent conduct following it. Hasty impressions, which some ministers are very ready to observe and admire, are often lost in a little time, and those who have been under them become worse than they were before. I have no idea of conversion, as passing a certain line, and then getting into a saving state. Conversion is *a work of time*, and I see *no right* we have to say any are converted or become good, till one hath

a longer season of trial, to observe, whether they *continue* steadfast in the practice of righteousness, and act in every circumstance and relation, in the main, consistent with the demands of the gospel. I wish you may have the pleasure to see many such converts.

I thank you likewise for your hint about Mr. THOMAS, in the account given of him by CALAMY. I have read it often, and transcribed some passages from it into the blank leaf of the Bible, which always lies upon my desk, particularly the following. "Si
" non concedatur ut præco sim publi-
" cus, sim tamen operarius: quod
" publice non possum, faciam, [ut
" licet, valet] privatim. Quod non
" possum prædicando, prestem scri-
" bendo. Auxiliare, Domine, servum
" senilem." Mr. THOMAS was an
excellent man, yet Mr. NELSON in his
life of Bishop BULL, who spent some
time

time in THOMAS's family, insinuates that the Bishop had no advantage there. Such was that good man's *bigotry*.

If you have not got the Abridgment of BAXTER's *Saints Rest*, by Mr. FAWCETT, of this town, pray get it; as I think it a very good practical book, and may be useful to lend to your parishioners. I revised the manuscript, compared it with the original, added, altered, and left out, and have the vanity to think I improved it; though I wish now I had made more alterations in the phraseology.— BAXTER (notwithstanding what you may have heard to the contrary) was so far from being a *republican*, that he refused the engagement; opposed CROMWELL's measures and his party, and told him to his face, that “They (meaning the soberer presbyterians) esteemed their kingly government a blessing,

blessing, and knew not what they had done to forfeit it." To which CROMWELL answered, " God hath changed it, as he pleased."

I know how to pity you in your dull situation ; as mine is altogether, or nearly, as dull as your own, especially this winter season. I am mostly confined to the house, have very little company, and on some bad days, hardly see *the human face divine*. But I can take pleasure in my good books. I converse mostly with the *dead*, and that is the fittest converse for one, who is in a manner buried alive, and is literally *near the grave*. I wish to gain *spiritual* good by this converse, and to grow more " meet for the in- " *inheritance among the saints in light*." I should vastly prefer *Cheverel* to the bustle, hurries, luxury, and dissipation of *Bristol*, where you have lately been. An aged minister who used to go from his

his country obscurity, once a year, to visit some relations in *London*, would never stay above two or three days with them ; and when solicited to prolong his visit, used to say, “ No, I’ll go to my country-retirement ; for you are all mad—mad upon the world and pleasure.”

I am much obliged by your devout remembrance of me, and beg the continuance of it. My spirits are so weak and broken, that my best duties are extremely languid and defective. I rejoice in the merciful Advocate, whom the Father heareth always.

I am, dear sir,
your affectionate and faithful
friend, and humble servant,
JOB ORTON.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR,

April 24, 1774.

I HAVE long been so very weak and low, that I have had neither strength nor spirits to write any thing, but what was absolutely necessary. I bless God I am at present a little recruited. My spirits have been better, but my strength is still very small, and I am fearful of applying to any busines, or even fitting down to write, lest it should throw me back again into weakness and nervous complaints. However I must venture to send you a few lines: the confusion and interruption with which they are written may not make them less acceptable to you. My spirits have been greatly depressed, and a constant, painful sen-
fation

sation in every nerve and fibre hath wasted my flesh, and filled my mind with sensations exquisitely more painful than those of the body. I thank God, I have this last week been more comfortable, have got some refreshing sleep, and am more easy and cheerful; though I still find myself very weak, and unfit for any active service, much less for any thing like study. I desire to be some way or other serving and glorifying God; but how this can be done in such circumstances as mine, at least by me, it is not easy to say. But Providence hath wise and gracious ends to answer by our afflictions, even those which incapacitate us for those services, to which we are strongly inclined, and for which we have some proper qualifications. We are often, and indeed, almost always, at a loss, when we set ourselves to judge of the reasons of the divine conduct. Our duty

duty is submission :* but that is not easy to be practised, nor can it be maintained as it ought to be, without a *supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ*, which I wish may be more abundantly shed abroad into our hearts. You need it very much in your ministerial capacity ; and considering that station in which Providence hath fixed you, to quicken you to the duties of it, and to reconcile you to its inconveniences and disagreeable circumstances ; which I should think would be easily borne by a good man, who hath

health

* “ I wish to be content as a patient, waiting servant. St. PAUL styles himself, a servant, a minister, and an apostle of Christ, while *in prison*. — I have lately been comforted with this passage from an old writer. “ One act of silent submission, and a quiet application to those duties, which are immediately necessary, though neither easy nor honourable, is of much more value than a long train of activity and zeal in a publick and visible sphere of action, sweetened by reputation and applause.” Nov. 29, 1781.

health and spirits, and forms a just estimate of the worth of souls, the great business of life, and the duties of the ministerial office.

I have just been reading a volume of sermons written by a Dr. HOPKINS, formerly a prebendary of *Worcester*, published by the celebrated Dr. HICKES. In some account of his life prefixed to it, he observes, “ That he “ went every Saturday fourteen long “ dirty miles from *Worcester* to a “ small country-parish, believing that “ Christ paid the same price for the “ poor as the rich, the cottager and the “ courtier, and that a faithful pastor, “ who truly endeavoured to save the “ soul of the meanest ploughman, “ would have as great a reward from “ his Master, as he that laboured to “ convert the greatest emperor in the “ world.” He would say, “ That “ a priest was not to value his parish “ for

“ for the revenue or the quality of
“ the people in it, but purely as a cure
“ of souls, as a vineyard, in which he
“ was God’s husbandman: that as
“ large and as acceptable a return of
“ his labours might be made from a
“ country-cure, as from a parish in a
“ royal city, and that a good sermon,
“ by God’s blessing, would be the
“ power of God to salvation in a
“ church, where there was not a sword
“ or a diamond to be seen, as where
“ coaches crowded about the church
“ door.”

I wish Dr. STONHOUSE’s inferences, in the newspapers, from my Letters, may be of service to their readers. We do not know what good we do. A young physician of considerable reputation and fortune (Dr. BOSTOCK) died lately at *Liverpool* of a violent fever. A little before his death, he told the minister who attended

ed him, and who is a friend of mine, that he had received great and lasting benefit in his religious interests, by reading some letters of mine, to my nephew, when they were fellow-pupils together at the academy. I had no idea, that he or any one else, had seen such letters. But I am thankful he did, since they were attended with such an happy effect.*

I am truly concerned, that you have under your pastoral care any flagrantly disobedient to the laws of Christ. But what minister *hath not such under his care?* There was a traitor in Christ's family. Young ministers are apt to set out with expectations raised *too high*, and expect *more* encouragement and success than they

* The editor of these letters has reason to believe, that the publication of them has been useful: for which he would be thankful to a kind Providence.

are ever likely to find. “*Old Adam* will be too hard for young MELANCTHON,” as that venerable reformer complained, after he had been some time a preacher, and had great expectation from his zealous ministry.

I hope you will have some very comfortable and improving weeks with the doctor and his family, during his residence at *Cheverel*; which you must set against many uncomfortable and dreary ones in the winter. I wish the doctor would ride on horse-back every dry day, as I do. *Recipe caballum*, is his best prescription.* Surely he might meet with some gentle, easy horse, no matter how ill-shaped and ugly, that might carry him safely about the fields of *Cheverel*. I remember an

aged

* See the life of the Right Reverend Father in God, SETH, Lord Bishop of *Salisbury*, written by Dr. WALTER POPK, 1697, pages 65, 66, and 178.

aged gouty minister, who could not walk; and having a large garden, he used to ride often round it in a day upon an old steady horse, who used to count his rounds for him; and then, when he had completed them, would stop and proceed no further, though the rider tried every persuasive and pungent argument to excite him. I heartily wish and pray for his health and continued usefulness.—Mr. B. is settled at *Cam*, within a mile of *Dursley*, in *Gloucestershire*; which is, I imagine, about thirty miles from you. You might contrive to meet at some place equidistant: and he says, he shall be very glad to see you.

Continue your good wishes and prayers for me. I want more clearness and satisfaction as to the great concern. My prayers are so broken, and attended with so much distraction and impertinence, that they are uncomfor-

able to myself, and can hardly be acceptable, even with all the gracious allowance of the gospel. But I do not love to trouble my friends with my complaints, any further than to desire and direct their petitions.

Your's affectionately,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. Pray prevent your friend Mr. ** from buying me any of the castor-oil he spoke of, as I have met with some in this town, and have laid in a good stock of it. This is something like HOBES, with his new frieze-coat at ninety six. "This, said he, will last me three years; then I will have just such another." But I am no *Hobbist*.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

DEAR SIR,

July 22, 1774.

I AM very glad to hear, that you are getting upon a *plan of economy*.* You will find great comfort and benefit by attending to it diligently and daily, and making the errors of one day and week, a check upon the expences of the next. A man must deny himself many agreeable circumstances and indulgencies, if he would keep within the compass of a moderate income, especially if he would save something, as all young men, particularly single men, ought to do. I think no man living ought to spend *the whole* of his income, but make some provision

K 3

yearly

* In the fifteenth letter are some excellent observations on economy. Dr. KIPPIS.

yearly for contingent and necessary expences. In this view, I have found it absolutely necessary to avoid taking some journies, buying some books,* or particularly expensive cloaths, which otherwise I should have liked. An error on the *saving* side is by far the best, as being most for a man's (especially a clergyman's) reputation, interest, and usefulness. Besides, minds formed to a benevolent turn, and which are ready to pity, assist, and relieve the distressed, will be often, without the utmost frugality, brought into a very disagreeable situation; either to withhold their charity, and thereby hurt their judgment and inclination,

“ Be cautious not to purchase books, which you do not want. Buy those chiefly, which will be of great and standing use to you, as a divine, through life; as some good critics, commentators, and practical writers. But I am afraid of your over-doing, even in buying useful books.”—MR. ORTON to the editor.

clination, or to leave some debts unpaid beyond the proper time, or to solicit their income before it is due; either of which will be very injurious to their credit and character, and the acceptance and success of their ministry. Considering your natural disposition, you ought to read WATKINSON *on economy*,* (price four-pence) at least once a quarter, till you have not only imbibed his maxims, but brought yourself to an habit of acting upon them, and never for a single instance, or in the value of a penny, swerving from them. There will be another great advantage in your case attending this. It will habituate you to foresight, a care to remember, and consider, and calculate times and expences,

K 4

especially

* WATKINSON *on economy*, with archbishop HORT'S *Instructions to the Clergy*, and Dr. STONHOUSE'S *Hints to a Curate*, bound together, make an admirable *Vade-Mecum* for a young clergyman.

especially before you go from home. It will dispose and habituate you to get your sermons ready in time; and in short, have a most happy influence on your health, fortune, and reputation. That remark hath been sealed by the ruin of thousands for both worlds, *He that despiseth small things, shall fall by little and little, (Eccles. xix. 1.)* I hope you will excuse the freedom with which I write to you upon this subject, as your comfort and usefulness lie near my heart.

I shall, I believe, read no more of the controversy* your letter speaks of; as I am tired with such idle and endless debates.† Mr. BAXTER said in his old age

* Between the late Mr. FLETCHER, vicar of Madeley, Shropshire, and his opponents.

† “ I know no better book than Dr. WILLIAMS’s *Gospel-truth stated and vindicated*, to enable you to judge of these controversies. He is the clearest, fairest controversial writer I am acquainted with.”—Mr. ORTON.

age, “ I have done with these debates and speculations. The creed, the Lord’s prayer, and the ten commandments content me, and are my daily meat and drink, and have been so to many other aged divines and christians.” But these controversies are no new things ; they are as old as christianity, and were foretold in it ; and therefore should be no stumbling-block to any. The things so much disputed about are not and cannot be fundamentals. Let ministers dwell upon the plain things of the gospel ; and preach indisputable doctrines practically, and moral duties evangelically.

I shall be glad to see Dr. STONHOUSE’s *Hints to a Curate* ;* and wish they may do much good. Price 6d, sold by RIVINGTON.

I

* This useful treatise was first published in 1774, when the editor of these letters was the doctor’s

I bless God, I have been in better spirits for the last fortnight, and been able pretty nearly to balance accounts with my correspondents, and to do a little in revising some sermons, which I mean to publish. But I cannot do much at a time. Many hours, and some whole days, I am quite laid aside as useless, and often in great pain and weakness. But having obtained help of God, I continue to this day: and blessed be his name, have some intervals of ease and cheerfulness, which I hope

doctor's curate. An eminent dignitary (Dr. TUCKER, dean of Gloucester) speaks of it in the following manner. "It is as seasonable and useful a thing as any the doctor ever published. And though much of his plan may be impracticable in large parishes, yet many of the hints may be well adopted in all places: and the clergy in general have all something to learn from it."—One of our present Bishops gives these *Hints* to those whom he ordains.

hope are employed to some valuable purposes. But notwithstanding all this favourable discipline, and this mixture of mercies and afflictions, which I have experienced for so many years, I find very little improvement in the divine life. I feel much languor and deadness at those seasons, and in those circumstances, when I ought to be most serious, lively, and attentive, and cannot raise my groveling heart to that spirituality and heavenly mindedness, which is so desirable for one, who is on the borders of the grave. My thoughts cling too much to earth, empty as it is, and to this body, from which I have suffered, and am daily suffering, so much pain and uneasiness.

—I entertain myself in reading my good old books, in which there is a favour and a suitableness to my case, which I find in few modern ones. I have been reading for a fifth or sixth time

time Dr. LUCAS's *Enquiry after Happiness*, and his other pieces, which always afford me new pleasure.* I pray God to assist and prosper you in all your undertakings for his glory, and the edification of the church, and beg the continuance of your prayers for me, that I may be doing some little good, while I am continued here, and be growing more and more meet for a nobler sphere of service, when my

Master

* LUCAS's character as a writer, as given by DR. DODDRIDGE.—“His style very peculiar: sometimes exceeding free, nearly approaching conversation: sometimes grand and sublime: generally very expressive. His method not clear, but thoughts excellent; many taken from attentive observation of life: wrote as entirely devoted to God, and superior to the world. His *Practical Christianity* most valuable; and *Enquiry after Happiness*, especially the second volume of it.”—*Manuscript.*

Master calls me hence. I am always
glad to hear from you, and am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate and faithful
friend, and humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

DEAR SIR,

January 14, 1775.

At this season of the year, it is usual for all wise and prudent people to settle their accounts, to pay their debts, and to leave none outstanding. But it is the unhappy case of some, who bear an honest mind, and are willing to be out of debt, not to be able to be so. This is at present, and is often, my own case with regard to my epistolary correspondents. Not for want of an honest mind, or a real affection to my friends, but through inability. I have long been a bankrupt in my health, and strength, and spirits, and must throw myself upon the compassion and kindness of my friends to bear with me and excuse me, and I hope they are, and will be willing, to accept

accept of a composition, and to take a part of what I owe to their friendship in lieu of the whole. I have no reason to suppose, that you in particular will be an unmerciful creditor, and therefore must beg your acceptance of a small composition for two or three very friendly letters, for which I am indebted to you. It is so painful and injurious to me in general to write, and there are so few intervals, in which I can muster up a little strength and a few spirits to write to my friends, that I need great candour and indulgence from them. Nor is it so easy on other accounts to me to write as it was formerly: in all respects, *non sum qualis eram*. But I hope all my friends are endeavouring to resemble our common Father and Friend, who accepts according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not; who considers

confiders our frame, and makes gracious allowances for our infirmities.

I am sorry for the trouble and vexation you have had, and are likely to have, with your *eccentrick* singers. They are in general conceited, troublesome fellows, and have no more religion than an organ or a fiddle. And I wish, the doctor, when he comes to you, may be able to bring them to order. But steadiness, and not yielding to them, is the only way to humble them.

Tu ne cede malis ; sed contra audentior ito.
I would propose in the mean time, that you talk calmly and seriously to them *separately*, and endeavour to give them better notions than they have, of the *nature* and *design* of *Psalmody* ; and particularly urge upon their consciences a reverence for the presence of God ; and how affronting it must be to him to have the church turned into a *theatre*, and

and divine worship into *a farce*. I know nothing more likely to shame and reform them.*

I am glad you saw Lady WHITMORE at *Bath*. A short interview with her now and then, when you can enjoy it, in passing, without appearing to force yourself upon her notice, may be

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L

serviceable

* All persons, says Archbishop SECKER, in his second charge to his clergy, who are by nature qualified, ought to learn, and constantly join, to glorify Him that made them, in psalms and spiritual songs. This was the practice of the early christians: it was restored very justly at the reformation: and hath declined of late, within most of our memories, very unhappily. For the improvements made by a few in church-music, were they real improvements, will seldom equal the harmony of a general chorus; in which any lesser dissonances are quite lost; and it is something inexpressibly elevating, to hear the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters and of mighty thunders, to speak in the words of scripture, making a joyful noise to the God of their salvation, and singing his praises with understanding.

serviceable to you. But you have lived long enough in the world already, not to depend upon the promises of great people. “ Surely, men of high degree are a lie,”* is as true now, as it was in DAVID’s time, and the inference he drew, is equally wise and salutary, not to trust in them, but to make the most high God our friend and refuge, who will never forsake us. I can see no impropriety in your making her a present of my *Discourses to the Aged*.† I know not whether the author’s being a dissenter would prejudice her against them. But this I know assuredly, that

Sir

* Psalm lxii. 9.

† Second edition, price three shillings and sixpence.— The subjects of which are admirably adapted to the situation of the persons for whom they were intended; and concerning which, it was justly observed, that they breathe an excellent spirit, and shew an earnest desire in the writer to advance the interests of genuine piety, and practical religion.— KIPPIS’s account of Mr. ORTON.

Sir Thomas WHITMORE often treated the author with great civility and respect, when he was in his company, especially about thirty years ago, at the time our county-infirmary was just established.*

The death of Miss W. of this town, was a very sudden and awful event. It was occasioned by a mortification in her bowels, brought on, it is supposed, by eating too many raisins on the preceding day. The family were greatly affected, but bore the calamity well. It fell peculiarly heavy on a young gentleman in *London*, of

L 2 a most

• Mr. ORTON had acted voluntarily as secretary to the infirmary ; drawn up some of its first reports ; had preached in its behalf at his place of worship ; at the same time subscribing himself, and procuring the subscriptions of others : and as party disputes ran high at the time of its establishment, he had the happy art of so conciliating matters, that the charity received no essential injury.

a most amiable temper and character, to whom she would have been married in a few months. He came down to the funeral, and shewed much of the spirit of a christian, with all the feelings of a man, and the tenderness of a lover. I wrote to Dr. STONHOUSE an account of the circumstances of the case, addressed to his daughter, which I find he inserted in the *Bristol* news paper; which if it doth good it is well.*

I can

• “— So speedily was this lovely flower cut down, in all the bloom of health and cheerfulness; and with the most agreeable prospects before her! — So soon may *other* young ladies vanish from their parents and friends, and enter upon an *awful* eternity; so soon may all their schemes and views for *this* world be blasted at once! — Those who are *unaffected* with such an *instructive* event as this, or can be soon *forgetful* of it, do great injury to their own judgement, and to the good education they have had. — ’Tis to be hoped this *striking* and *sudden*

I can read very little these short dark days, but I sometimes entertain myself with some of my good old authors. FULLER's *Holy State* hath afforded me much pleasure: in which there are many trifling things, but some lively remarks; it abounds with historical anecdotes, some of which deserve remembrance, and may pertinently be introduced into sermons, and be very entertaining and useful. He deals much in puns and gingle, but was a man of vast reading. He published several folios, as the *Holy State*, his *Church History*, (a large valu-

L 3 able

sudden removal of so young a person into the other world, will be the means of causing survivors to ponder on it, and to receive instruction from it; and especially to think, now and then, on that important text, so awfully illustrated by *this* and the like frequent events; (Prov. xxvii. 1.) "Boast not thyself of *to-morrow*; for thou knowest not what *a day* may bring forth."

able folio,) and another entitled, *the Worthies of England*, or the History of eminent Men, in the several counties where they were born.— I read not long ago, Sir MATTHEW HALE's *Contemplations*. If you have them not, I would recommend them to your perusal. The style is awkward; but they are full of excellent matter, and would furnish out materials for many useful sermons. I have read them more than once or twice before, but never observed their usefulness so much in this view, as lately. Besides this, there is a variety of most excellent *hints of advice*, concerning a man's behaviour in every part of his *social* character; tho' they are only given, as his thoughts, purposes and resolutions, with regard to his own *personal* conduct. He is a striking instance of the truth of that observation, which cannot be too often inculcated, or too carefully

carefully attended to, — “ that if a man allows himself to be imprudent, giddy and inattentive *in any one instance*, tho’ it be in itself *small* and *inconsiderable*, it will have an unhappy influence upon his *whole* conduct ; no fixed principle keeps him from being so in all *other* instances, and had he equal temptations, he would violate *all* the duties of prudence, and by degrees, those of morality and religion too.” It is therefore peculiarly necessary, and of the utmost importance, that persons in their *early* years and *first* setting out in life, keep a *resolute* watch over themselves, even in the *smallest* instances, in which their natural temper leads them to be imprudent and indiscreet, and not neglect this *important* question, before they undertake even any little affair, “ *Is it right and fit, prudent and proper?*” I have read somewhere of a saying of the famous

BRUTUS, that he looked upon that person as having been ill educated, or as having spent his youth very badly, who had not learned to say "NO" boldly.

— I am thankful, that I was led in *early* life to read so much *practical* divinity, and the lives and histories of *good* men; as I can *remember* what I then read better than what I read yesterday, which is the case with most *old* people, especially if they have bodily diseases added to the natural decays of age. I have fewer and shorter intervals of what may be called ease than usual, and must expect them to grow shorter. I am a wonder to myself, that I have lived to see the *beginning* of *another year*. I cannot expect to see the *end* of *it*. May I employ the poor remains of life as well as possible! I wish my infirmities may suggest *hints* of *caution* to my younger

younger brethren and friends, to apply diligently to their Master's work, to be frugal of their *time*; and frugal of their *money*, as age and prior infirmities, may render them incapable of doing good, or filling up stations in which they might be comfortably supported. And the state of the world *at present* is such, that nothing can be more disagreeable and painful, than to be in circumstances of necessity and dependence, when every comfortable circumstance and accommodation is so desirable to lighten the burdens of life. Loss of time, and neglect of opportunities of usefulness, often oppresses my spirits. Spending too much time about *trifling* books and studies, the contents and subjects of which I could wish entirely to have *blotted from my memory*, is a very painful circumstance. I mention what gives me uneasiness, that you may now avoid the like, and employ

employ your health and money, your time and abilities, so as to leave no room for *painful* reflections hereafter. May God prolong your life, as much as his glory, and your own usefulness and comfort may render desirable, and may the *close of it* have no bitter remorse, no uneasy sensations attending it ! Continue your prayers for me, and believe me to be, Dear Sir,

Your sincere and affectionate
friend, and faithful servant,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. Besides LUCAS's *Enquiry after Happiness*, (as mentioned in a former letter) he published two volumes of sermons, which I much admire; and likewise a small tract, concerning the duty of servants, with advices, and prayers for their use: but his principal work was a small treatise called *Practical Christianity*, or the chief design

design of the gospel, which hath gone through many editions, and contains the substance of forty or fifty excellent sermons, and is one of the best books I know for a young minister, or indeed any person, to read a chapter of it daily.*

LETTER

* I herewith (says Sir RICHARD STEELE) send you Dr. LUCAS's *Practical Christianity*, for your *serious* perusal. If you have *already* read it, I desire you would give it to one of your friends, who has *not*. I think you cannot recommend it better than in inserting, by way of specimen, these passages which I *point out* to you.—Since I have a *soul* capable of happiness and misery, it naturally follows, that it were unreasonable to *lose* this soul for the *gain* of the whole world. For the soul is *I myself*; but if *that* be *miserable*, *I* must needs be so. *Outward* circumstances of fortune may give the world occasion to *think* me happy, but they can never *make* me so. Shall I call myself *happy*, if *discontent* and *sorrow* eat out the life and spirit of my soul? If *lusts* and *passions* riot, and mutiny in my *bosom*?

LETTER XVII.

DEAR SIR,

July 28, 1775.

I AM willing to write to you once more, before you leave *Cheverel*, to go to your new living,* though I have nothing very particular to say to you. I was glad to see your mother, as it gave me an opportunity of conversing with her about your settlement at *Wormington*; and she talked like a wise and good woman, and a tender parent. I really think it would be best for you, not to keep house there, *at least at present*. Cannot you contrive

bosom? If my *sins* scatter an uneasy shame all over me, and my *guilt* appalls and frightens me? What *avails* it, that my *rooms are stately*, &c? See the *Guardian*, Vol. 1, No. 63, for the remainder of this striking quotation.

* *Wormington*, in *Gloucestershire*.

contrive *to board* with some reputable farmer in the parish, in whose house you might have a room, and be accommodated with all necessaries at a cheap rate? Thus you would live in a family-way, and not find the ensuing winter so dull, as it will be, if you are in your parsonage-house: and thus you will save money to furnish your house, when you see occasion for so doing. I have often heard Dr. DODDRIDGE and several other divines say, that they lived very comfortably in farm-houses, at their first setting out, and I should think it on many accounts desirable for you.* But of this you must judge for yourself.

* Extract from a letter of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) DODDRIDGE to a lady of his acquaintance; written soon after he began to preach.

July 15, 1723.

—“Great revolutions have happened in my little affairs since I wrote to you last. On the first of June I removed from Hinckley, and am come to a small village in the neighbourhood

I waited with impatience to hear from Dr. STONHOUSE, to learn the state of his own and his family's health. The letter I have received from him, like all other earthly intelligences

bourhood of *Kibworth*; where I am settled, and have laid aside all thoughts of going to *Coventry*, though I have been much solicited to it since my coming hither.— My settlement here is on some accounts very pleasant, but on others disagreeable enough. I board at a farmer's house; and as for eating and drinking we are well enough provided for, excepting the article of dear tea, of which I am confident, there never was one drop drank in the house since it was built, unless it were what the garden and meadows afford. The master and mistress of the family, are very good plain sort of people; but *his* politeness extends no farther than the team and the plough, nor *her's* than the poultry or the dairy; and they are so much taken up with these important affairs, that your poor friend has but little of their company. I am frequently alone twenty-one hours in twenty-four, and sometimes breakfast, dine, and

ligences and concerns, is counter-changed, and gives reason for a mixture of joy and grief. But he and I have lived so long to little purpose, if we have not learned to expect these mixed

and sup by myself. I cannot say that this *eremitical* life is very agreeable to my natural temper, which inclines me to society. I am necessarily obliged to study hard, and if it were not for that my life would be a burden."

In what manner Mr. DODDRIDGE spent his time in this early period of his life, in such retired situations, will be seen by the following letter to his brother-in-law,* wherein he excuses himself for writing short humourous accounts of business.

Harborough, June 29, 1726,

Wednesday morning, eight o'clock.

Dear Brother,

I make it a maxim with me, to write either to you or my sister, whenever an opportunity offers itself for that purpose. So that you have two or three letters from me, when

* The Rev. Mr. JOHN NETTLETON, of Ongar, in Essex, who died in the year 1734.

mixed scenes, and not to be greatly moved by them ; and especially to improve them to quicken our diligence, and improve our piety. He is gone with his family to spend some time

when other more exact correspondents have but one. You will not be offended then, that my letters are no longer ; for you must consider, that I have a great deal of business which requires my daily attendance. I was up at five o'clock this morning, and have been all this while studying a part of the *Epistle to the Romans*, and writing letters. At this very time, DEMOSTHENES is waiting to entertain me with one of his Philippicks ; and VIRGIL is bringing back AENEAS to his camp, when I have long been in pain for his absence. Doctor TILLOTSON has prepared an admirable sermon, which he will deliver quickly in my chamber, with his usual grace and sweetness. And then GERRARD BRANDT, will go on with his History of the persecution of the Remonstrants after their condemnation at the Synod of *Dort*. In the afternoon I expect to hear from PLINY, who generally

time at *Chester-House*, in *Northamptonshire*, which is a charming place for meditation, reading, and devotion;

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generally favours me with two or three epistles a day, though a stranger and an heathen, while you, a christian minister and my brother, will hardly write once in a quarter. I am indeed to drink a dish of tea with some agreeable women in the evening, and may possibly look over a chapter or two in the history of the four Kings.* If I should be moderately transported with the joy of victory, or the grief and sorrow of a defeat; with love to Mrs. * * *, or anger against my antagonist, I hope to find my remedy in the conversation of Mr. BRAGGE, who has lately undertaken to teach me the government of the passions, which indeed I ought to have learnt some time ago. Dr. POTTER is teaching me Grecian Antiquities. But I fear, I shall hardly have time to speak with him to-day. However, I will, if possible, attend upon my tutor CRADOCK in

the

* Clubs, Spades, &c.—“I am determined to leave off cards, which have in some instances proved a snare to me.” *Diary*, 1729.

and there is no doubt but that he and Mrs. STONHOUSE will improve it accordingly. I heartily wish he may be free while there, from all disagreeable and impertinent company, and that his health may be greatly recruited by his recess. The doctor wishes to leave *Bristol* entirely, and I trust Providence will direct him to some comfortable and useful settlement. I have desired
him

the evening, who is lecturing to me on the epistles, with great accuracy and solidity. Besides this, I have a kind of a short sermon to preach in the family, according to my daily custom, and three or four letters to transcribe into short-hand.— Now I will leave you, who are one of the greatest clerks I know, to judge whether all this business will leave me time to say any thing more, than how does my dear sister, with my service to her? I am,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

See also Mr. ORTON's Life of Dr. DODDRIDGE, page 21, second edition.

him to remember the words of the poet :

Yet reason, while it forms the subtle plan,
Some purer source of pleasure to explore,
Must deem it vain for that poor pilgrim, man,
To think of resting till his journey's o'er.

I am glad I have no visitors like Mr. * * *, no such *Bath* friends. I would not have them. They are not *friends*. While I am independent, I would not submit to such grievances and inconveniences, nor should my wife (if I had such an one as his). “ What must we do ? ” — they will say : Why break off all correspondence with such. Tell them (as I did at *Shrewsbury*, and do here) “ I am old and infirm : I will have my own hours. At them I shall be glad to see my friends ; but they must come soon, and go soon,* or not at all.” — “ But we

M 2 cannot

* It has occurred to us, (says Dr. KIPPIS) that Mr. ORTON, who so long resided at *Kidderminster*,

cannot do this at * *." Then I would remove to the land's-end, or to a welch-mountain, and would not sacrifice such blessings as health, regularity, domestic comfort, and family-religion, for any person

Kidderminster, the principal seat of Mr. BAXTER's ministerial usefulness, had a considerable resemblance, in certain respects, to that famous divine. In extent of abilities, BAXTER was undoubtedly greatly superior to Mr. ORTON, and he prodigiously exceeded him in the multiplicity of his writings; but with regard to the nature of their practical works, and the strictness, (we had almost said the rigidness) of their personal piety, there was no small degree of similarity. Both of them display in their productions, the same ardent zeal to excite the attention of men to their eternal concerns, and urge these concerns with peculiar energy and pathos. Both of them were animated with a seriousness of spirit, which seems never to have forsaken them in the most ordinary occurrences of life: nor could either of them bear to be much interrupted in their sacred employments. When

some

person or persons whatsoever. I am independent, and will be so. A few nights ago, I heard some *weaver's lad* singing a song under my window, of which I remember no more than this — “ Let them say what they will — By Jove I'll be free.” — I have little company and acquaintance. Ease and quiet, and an interview now and then with a worthy friend, bound my ambition. But I have a numerous and excellent society of prophets, apostles, and practical writers, especially BAXTER, BATES, and SCUDDER, with whom I have lately been conversing.

M 3 I am some visitors to Mr. BAXTER, after having sat awhile with him, said, “ We are afraid, sir, that we break in upon your time;” his answer was, “ to be sure you do.” What was Mr. ORTON's disposition in this respect, is expressed with great vivacity in one of his letters to a young clergyman, Letter xvii, page 163, 164.— *Account by KIPPIS.*

I am truly sorry for your complaints of yourself, and the state of your own mind : but hope, they are not altogether just. The neglect or formal performance of secret duties, is but a bad symptom. But I am glad you have a conviction of this. Cherish it, my dear sir, I beseech you ; and immediately and resolutely set to work, and labour to attain more of the *devotional*, (that is) the true, spirit of the gospel.-- If you have (as I hope you falsely suggest) all to begin again, let it be done without delay, with a humble dependence upon, and diligent seeking after, divine grace. Endeavour to improve short intervals in conversing with God and your own heart : repeat some devotional psalms and hymns, when you are lying down in bed, when you awake, and are rising and dressing. I think I have found some advantage by this. Bishop KENN's are

are worth committing to memory. Apply diligently to your studies, and the religious care of the souls of your parish, talking seriously and closely to them: remembering, that it is true in spirituals, "the liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself."*

Your friends here are well. I shall be glad to receive a letter from you. There is no dean or bishop loves you, and wishes you so well, and would be glad to serve you in his way, more than

Your's very affectionately,

JOB ORTON.

M 4 LETTER

• I recommended lately to a friend, OSTERVALD's treatise against the *Sin of Impurity*: which contains the strongest motives for a life of purity, and the best *directions* how to attain it, that are any where to be found. This most valuable book is frequently to be bought from catalogues at a very low price.

—Mr. ORTON.

LETTER XVIII.

DEAR SIR,

September 23, 1775.

I RECEIVED your letter from *Glocester*; and am much affected by what you say in it of Bishop *WARBURTON*'s state of superannuation.* He was a man of great learning and abilities; and I have several excellent letters of his by me, which were written many years ago to Dr. *DODDRIDGE*.†

It

* —“ Not that his memory and faculties, though much impaired, were ever wholly disabled :” — says the present Bishop of *WORCESTER*, in his very interesting, and finely written *Account of the life, writings, and character of Bishop WARBURTON*.

† Since published in a *Collection of Letters to and from Dr. DODDRIDGE, of Northampton*; by the editor of these Letters, 1790.

It gives me pleasure to find you are so comfortable in your new situation, and I heartily wish you success in it. I am afraid you find your parish like the field of the slothful, and that you have much difficult work to root out, as well as to plant. But set about it vigorously and resolutely, and in divine strength, with earnest prayer for assistance and success, and God will prosper you.—The plan of your introductory discourse, differs nothing from mine, on the same text, 1 Cor. ii. 2. (which which was the first sermon I ever preached, and was delivered at *Welford*, in *Northamptonshire*, April 15, 1739.) only I enter more into the several parts of the text than you have done, and have a more particular application; else in other respects your's is unexceptionable, proper and useful.—Methinks, I would fain have you do something on each part of the Lord's day by way of

of exhortation. If you preach in the morning, expound in the afternoon one of the lessons, or the epistle and gospel for the day, in a short manner, with some practical reflections upon it. You will meet with sufficient help from your commentators, particularly from HENRY's *Exposition*,* and DODDRIDGE'S

* Mr. ORTON was a great admirer of the two Mr. HENRYS, father and son, and much resembled them in his plain and practical manner of preaching. "I have been hearing HENRY the third," said a good man once to his neighbour, after having attended a lecture, preached by Mr. ORTON, at Broad Oak, in Flintshire, the place where Mr. PHILIP HENRY had formerly lived.— He read Mr. MATTHEW HENRY's Expositions in his family, and had a most happy faculty, whilst he was doing it, of abridging that truly useful, though too diffusive writer.— The editor of these Letters avails himself of the opportunity afforded him, of expressing his thankfulness, for having been made acquainted with them in early life, owing to the generosity of a near relation

DRIDGE'S *Family Expositor*. This will be easier to you, than making a sermon, perhaps equally useful to your people; and it will be a likely means to engage them to attend more regularly,

tion, who made him a present of them; and with great pleasure bears his testimony to their usefulness, and the worth and piety of their author. — Mr. MATTHEW HENRY was a very excellent man, and a most laborious and useful divine. Perhaps, no writings, equally voluminous, (consisting of seven volumes in folio) have been more acceptable, or been the means of doing more good. And when it is considered, that he wrote so much, without neglecting any other duties of his station, (as his diary, which the editor is possessed of, manifestly shews he did not) and died but in the fifty-second year of his age; it appears extraordinary, and points out what may be done, where abilities are not wanting, and where there is an ardent zeal to promote the glory of God, and the good of mankind. — As the editor esteems it a kind of literary curiosity, he will lay before his readers

larly, when they have something more than the common service. Bishop BURNET strongly recommends long texts and short sermons, or, in our style, expositions: and this method

of

readers a brief account of the progress which Mr. HENRY made in writing his Expositions on the Bible, as it is extracted from his diary.

The first mention he finds made of them occurs while the author was employed in writing on Genesis xiv.

V. I. January 17, 1705, studied in Genesis xiv.—
August 18, 1706: finished the Pentateuch.
(in about eighteen months.)

V. II. October 4, 1706; began the Historical Books.
— April 5, 1708: finished the Historical Books.
(in a year and six months.)

V. III. December 13, 1708: began the Poetical Books.—Feb. 16, 1710: finished the Poetical Books.
(in about a year and two months.)

V. IV. April 10, 1710: began the Prophets.—May 29, 1712: finished the Prophets.
(in about two years and one month.)

V. V. September 9, 1712: began the Evangelists.
—December 11, 1713. finished the Evangelists.
(in about a year and three months.)

V. VI.

of expounding some part of the scripture read in the service, hath been practised by many of the clergy in former days, who were most eminent for

V. VI. December 11, 1713: began the *Acts*. — April 17, 1714: finished the *Acts*.
(in about five months.)

As Mr. HENRY died June 22, 1714; (before he had compleated his design) the continuators of the Expositions were,

Dr. EVANS, who wrote on the *Romans*.

Mr. SIMON BROWNE, *1 Corinthians*.

Mr. MAYO, *2 Corinthians*.

Mr. ATKINSON, of *Leicester*, *Timothy*.

Mr. JEREMIAH SMITH, *Titus*.

The same, or Mr. MOTTRESHED, of *Manchester*, *Philem*.

Mr. TONG, *Hebrews*.

Dr. WRIGHT, James.

Mr. HILL, *1 Peter*.

Mr. MERRIL, of *Hampstead*, *2 Peter*.

Mr. REYNOLDS, John.

Mr. BILLINGSLEY, *Jude*.

Mr. TONG, *Revelations*.

In Dr. KIPPIS's Account of Mr. ORTON in the *Biogr. Britan.* he remarks, "that Mr. O. had been solicited, during his retirement, to form a regular abridgment of HENRY's Expositions; but his increasing infirmities obliged him to decline

for piety and zeal.*— I have just been reading again *Rishop BEDEL's Life*, who was an eminently pious and good, as well as a very learned, man. It is said of him, that every Sunday he *expounaed*

decline the employment.”— *Mr. ORTON* in a letter to a friend writes thus:— “ I hardly know what you mean by my abridgment of *HENRY*. I never undertook, or thought of such a thing: if I had, my days would have been abridged and finished long ago. It is too arduous a work for my strength and capacity. I wish it were done by a good hand; but as the copy is the bookseller's property, there will be great difficulties in the way. — I suppose, you may have heard me express my wish, that it were abridged, and from thence concluded, that I had done it.”

DODDRIDGE'S

* See page 7 of these Letters.— “ It may be proper at other times to explain, in the way of sermons, the *Book of Common Prayer*, so far as it relates to the *constant* service of the church; for it is as necessary, that people should *understand* the *devout use*, and *true* meaning of it, as that a soldier should *understand* the dextrous use of his *weaponsDr. STONHOUSE's Hints to a Curate*, page 4.

expounded the epistle and gospel for the day.
If you have never read that life, I would recommend it to you; from which you will do well to make some extracts into your common-place book. In the latter part of the book, is the best confutation of the tenets of popery,

DODDRIDGE's character of HENRY, as a writer.— “ HENRY very peculiar: style short and pointed: many antitheses: little fancies: his heads beginning with the same letters or chiming words: yet this sometimes natural: great seriousness: sprightly thoughts, digested in very good order. His Commentary excellent; tho' rather too large: too much of typical and allegorical interpretation; yet judicious on history, and the import of original words. The most entertaining things from PATRICK, POOL, JOSEPHUS, CALVIN, and many more: only despised by those, who do not know them. His Discourses on *Meekness*, the *Sacrament*, *Early Piety*, and his sermon at the *opening of Chester meeting*, are very good, and particularly deserve to be read. His style is formed on scripture, to which he has many allusions.” — MS.

pery, which I ever saw in so small a compass.

I am glad you have introduced Psalm-singing into your church, at *Wormington*. I think your best way of carrying it on in an agreeable manner, will be to get some of your young men to your own house now and then, and to go over some plain tunes with them, till they can sing them perfectly; and thus by degrees the rest of the congregation will learn them. Let not these young men sit together, but be dispersed properly over the church. I used to take this method with my young people at *Shrewsbury*; but I never attempted to teach them the grounds of music, because I thought it unnecessary, and indeed because I was not capable of it. But they learned to sing such tunes, and in such time and method, that that part of the service was honourably conducted. By degrees you

you and they may learn some more, tho' I should think about eight common metre, six long metre, and two short metre tunes, would be enough. Probably some neighbouring parish clerk would come once a week to teach them for a small sum: but I think you can teach them sufficiently yourself. It will be adviseable for you to go to the *school*, and see how the children learn, and speak to and encourage them; and to direct the mistress, privately, how to discharge her duty, and excite her to it. The presence of the minister of the parish, now and then, will quicken both teacher and learners, and have a good effect. You will in the pulpit, and especially in private, excite the parents to be solicitous, that their children may learn their books and catechism.

Dr. EVANS's *Sermons on the Christian Temper*, are I think on the whole, VOL. I. N. some

some of the best discourses I ever read for judgment, style, fulness of matter, regularity of thought and division, and coming home to men's consciences. I have lately bought a neat scotch edition of them in duodecimo.*

I have now good reason to believe, that my little tract on *Christian Worship*† hath sold pretty well. You will, I know, join with me in thankfulness on this account, and in prayer, that it may be further useful. The manner in which the DEAN of GLOUCESTER speaks

* EVANS — his style grave, plain, manly, nervous : his heads always distinct and well ranged : scriptures properly collected : thoughts, especially in application, thrown close together : his *sermons to young people* scarce and valuable : his *Christian Temper* one of the best practical pieces in our language.— DODDRIDGE. MS.

† Price ninepence.— The subjects treated of in this piece, which has been translated into *Welsh*, are, the profitable hearing of the word ; the joining in public prayer ; and the singing of the praises of God.— *Account.*

speaks of this undertaking gives me no small pleasure, and I hope his recommendation will introduce it into the hands of many who might otherwise never see it.

I have read Mr. JOHN WESLEY's *Address to the Americans*, and am much pleased with it. But I am tired with politics, and desire to be found among the quiet in the land.* A worthy

N 2

minister

* —“I am sick of politics, and mourn for our national state.— The colonies are mad ; and we are not much less so. There are many concealed rebels, and mock patriots among us, disseminating their rebellious, and republican principles. Most of them are grossly *ignorant* ; and *therefore* it is no wonder they are grossly *confident*.— I never *argue* with them ; but take what I apprehend to be the *most likely* method to silence them. When they begin to talk about bad ministers, bad laws, and the *poor Americans*, as they style these *rebels*, I reply, “ I don't *understand* politics. *Solomon* has observed that “ *the heart of Kings is unsearchable.*” (Prov. xxv. 3.) For kings have their

arcana

minister in *London* writes to me in the following manner. — “ I wish I and my family were settled, at least for some time, with you, or in some obscure corner of the land, where I should

arcana imperii, and reasons of state; of which *private* persons (who know not their counsels, motives or intelligence) cannot be judges; and *therefore* ought not, as they are too apt to do on every occasion, so peremptorily to pass their judgment. — Nor is the government of a kingdom their province. — The scriptures have enjoined me “ to honour the King; ” (1 Pet. ii. 17.) and “ not to despise government, or speak evil of dignities,” (2 Pet. ii. 10.) “ to be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake; ” (1 Pet. ii. 13.) and “ to speak evil of no man,” (Tit. iii. 2.) especially not of the higher powers.”

— When I find, that, notwithstanding they perceive my *disinclination* to any *political* discourse, they will still persist in it, and reply, “ Ay, but things are *so*, and *so*:” I continue to remind them of what the scriptures have declared to be *their* duty, as well as *mine*; and express my farther sentiments to this effect: “ It *may* be as you assert, but my Bible tells me, “ Thou shalt not

should hear nothing of what is passing in the world. For my part, I think both sides are mad, and trying which shall go the most desperate lengths. The question between *Great Britain* and the *Colonies* I never entered into. I have much more important concerns to take up my time and attention than to engage in an affair to which I am very unequal. What the end of these things may be, God only knows; but it is high time to prepare for the worst." — This good man speaks my sentiments fully. These things are

N 3

little

not revile the gods; that is, magistrates supreme, or subordinate, who are God's *representatives*; nor curse the rulers of thy people, (Exod. xxii. 28.) Thou shalt be subject to principalities, and powers, and obey magistrates." (Tit. iii. 1.) This I find the *best* and *most reasonable* way of treating these *doughty* politicians.— But really things look *very dark*, and God seems to be giving us up to a spirit of infatuation, and licentiousness." — MR. ORTON, 1775.

little to me, who am going out of the world. I am sorry for you that are young, and for posterity. But the Lord reigneth: to his favour and blessing I commend you in all your interests and attempts to do good: and am,

Your affectionate and

faithful, humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

DEAR SIR,

February 8, 1776.

I WAS glad to hear that you got safe to *Wormington*, through so many perils and difficulties by reason of the snow; and perhaps with some misgiving thoughts for having left your flock so long and in so dangerous a time;* as they never more need their pastor's watchful eye; and even his presence might be some restraint from excess. You will now, however, set yourself closely and diligently to your great work, and do them all the good in your power.— I am pleased to find, that you received the box of books safe, which I desire you to accept; hoping they

N 4

* Christmas.

will be useful to you, and consequently to your people. I could wish, you would have Bishop PATRICK's *Comments on the Old Testament*,* with LOWTH on the Prophets;† as likewise BAXTER's *Works*,‡ always at your elbow.

You

* Character of Bishop PATRICK as a commentator, by Dr. DODDRIDGE.—PATRICK is the most considerable in our language from *Genesis* to *Solomon's Song*. He has made great use of former writers, some jewish, others christian; very valuable: compare it with original: good system of jewish antiquities.—MS.

† Character of LOWTH, by the same.—A judicious commentary on the prophets, from *Isaiah* to *Malachi*; in which there are some good critical notes, and a fine collection of parallel scriptures. —MS.

‡ Character of BAXTER, as a practical writer, by the same.—BAXTER. His style inaccurate, because he had no regular education; and because he wrote continually in the views of eternity: but judicious, nervous, spiritual, and remarkably evangelical; a manly eloquence, and the most evident

You have probably heard of the death of the Earl of RADNOR. Doctor and Mrs. STONHOUSE came home last Thursday from *Longford Castle*, (his Lordship's seat in *Wiltshire*,) extremely fatigued,

evident proof of an amazing genius ; with respect to which, he may not improperly be called the english *Demosthenes* : exceeding proper for conviction ; see his *Saints Rest* ; all his *treatises on Conversion*, and especially his *Call to the Unconverted*, *Divine Life*, and *Counsels to young Men* : few were ever more instrumental for awakening and converting more souls. His book of *Converse with God in Solitude*, is a most sublime piece of devotion : his *Gildas Salvianus* is a most extraordinary piece, and should be read by every young minister before he takes a people under his stated care ; and I think the practical part of it deserves to be read every two or three years : for nothing has a greater tendency to awaken the spirit of a minister to that zeal in his work, for want of which many good men are but shadows of what, by the blessing of God, they might be, if the maxims and measures laid down in that incomparable treatise were strenuously pursued.

— MS.

fatigued, having gone through great perils owing to the depth of the snow, and the severity of the season. The doctor gives an agreeable and most instructive account of his patron's death; to whom, being called up in the middle of the night, he administered the sacrament, together with Lady RADNOR, some of his children, and servants, before he expired, with which he seems to have been much affected. Dr. HELE of *Salisbury* and

Dr.

— *M. S.* — See also ORTON'S *Life of DODDRIDGE*; p. 22, duod. edition.

As a writer, Mr. BAXTER had the approbation of some of his greatest contemporaries; such as ARCHBISHOP USHER, BISHOP WILKINS, DR. BARROW, ROBERT BOYLE, Esq. and MR. ADDISON.— See FAWCETT'S *preface to his abridgment of BAXTER'S Saints Everlasting Rest.*

I asked him what works of RICHARD BAXTER'S I should read. He said, "Read any of them; they are all good."— BOSWELL'S *Life of Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.* Vol. IV. p. 233.

Dr. STONHOUSE* attended him; and Dr. MOYSEY of Bath met them in consultation: but all medical help was vain. His Lordship had many excellent qualities in his character, and paid more regard to christianity and practical religion, than, I fear, most of our great people now do. The doctor intimates, that he had a strong sense of religion, and that he took leave of his family like a tender husband and father, and a sincere christian.†

The

* Dr. STONHOUSE was for two and twenty years physician to the county-infirmary at Northampton, and in very extensive practice; which he was obliged to give up on account of his health. After which the Earl of RADNOR gave him a living; and on his Lordship's illness, he, in conjunction with Dr. HELE, acted in his medical capacity, which he never did after his having quitted his profession as a physician, unless to his parishioners, or when desired by some particular friend.

† His Lordship died Jan. 28, 1776, aged 50.

— “A

The difference of sensible persons in their judgment, concerning our Friend's late publication, is no way uncommon in such cases. I wish he would

— “A knowing and virtuous gentleman, (says Bishop BURNET) who understands his religion and loves it, who practises the rules of virtue, without affectation and moroseness, who knows enough of law, to keep his neighbours in order, and to give them good advice ; who keeps meetings for his county, and restrains vice and disorder at them ; who lives hospitably, frugally and charitably ; who respects and encourages good clergymen, and worships God, both in his family and at church ; who educates his children well, who treats his servants gently, and deals equitably with his tenants and all others, with whom he has any concerns ; such a man shines, and is a publick blessing to all that see him, or come near him. Some such instances are yet left among us ; but alas ! there are not many of them.” — *Conclusion of his own Time : addressed to men of all orders and degrees.* A most excellent performance : which was printed separately in a small form some years ago ; and since, (viz. 1794) by Dr. JOHNSTONE, physician of Worcester.

would not mind their frivolous objections. Let him remember the story of the old man and his son and the ass. There is no pleasing every body, and to attempt it is foolish.* A person once wrote to Dr. DODDRIDGE, (not with the greatest humility) on the impropriety and unsoundness of one or two of his positions in a publication. He knowing it to be vain and endless to enter into such particulars, only replied, *quod scripsi, scripsi.*† The main concern of every christian, especially every minister, should be to please God: which whoever does, may set his heart at rest, whether he please

or

* “The judgment of the world is so whimsical and injudicious, and their favours so capriciously, absurdly, and most unjustly bestowed, as we may see every day, that if a man will fret at such things, he hath nothing to do but fret on, till death puts an end to his foolish sorrows.”—

JORTIN.

† “What I have written, I have written.”

or displease man, yea even his friends : nay, if he displease those whom he wished to please ; nay, and doth it in the very point in which he hoped and expected most of all to please them. The doctor has too much reason to complain of the unkindness of some of his more lukewarm brethren towards him. May God mend them ; I cannot. Complaining will not avail, but only irritate ourselves and them, and tend to make us less thankful for the many, many comforts we enjoy. I have sent him the following lines.

The wise in secret always hide their pain,
And only, where redress is sure, complain :
Contented rest with necessary ill,
And what they must submit to, seem to will.
Whilst babbling fools, repining at their fate,
Their wants, their wrongs, their discontents relate ;
And, ignorant of the make of human mind,
Solicit pity, where contempt they find.*

I think

* Near the time the above letter was written, Mr. ORTON wrote to Dr. STONHOUSE in the following manner, (communicated to the editor by Dr. S.)

" Dear

I think RAPIN's *History*, considered as an *History of England* in general, and not of a particular period, is the best we have. His being a foreigner, makes it probable, that he was more impartial,

“ Dear Doctor, 17th Feb. 1776.

“ About the time your last letter arrived, I had for some particular reasons, been thinking, how many mercies I had to be thankful for: and it led me to add largely to the catalogue.— I thank God, that I am not very rich; that I am not a lord; nor a lord's son; nor a lord's chaplain or dependent; that I have no connection with great people; that I am not a double-chin'd doctor, with two or three fat livings or sinecures, living upon the sweat and brains of a poor curate; that I never worshipped a golden calf for preferment and gain, nor made the ministry a spiritual traffic; that I have done what I could to support, assist, and encourage my poor brethren; that I never was in danger of substituting modes and forms and externals, for the life and power of religion; but learned from Dr. DODDRIDGE a different judgment, relish, and conduct: that amidst the corruptions of the clergy of your church

impartial, than a native englishman would be likely to be. He is in high reputation

church and curs, there are many upright, pious, zealous divines, who shine as lights in the world; who, tho' they do not meet with deserved preferment; because they will not defecrate themselves to seek it in the usual way, will make a glorious figure in the church triumphant. Among this number, I reckon Dr. STONHOUSE, and therefore esteem and honour him, however others neglect him. I know not, whether I should wish you a parish in B. for what good can you hope to do among such a people? I wish you were somewhere, where your labours would be more valued and more successful."

—“ The world is full of ill nature; and I have daily experienced so much of it, that I could almost fall out with mankind; if it were not for a few excellent friends, of which Mr. H. is one of the dearest. We must expect our share in the troubles of life: but let us take care to live upon good terms with God, and our own consciences, and we need not be deeply concerned about the malice of our open enemies, or the more dangerous treachery of our professed friends.” — Mr. DODDRIDGE to Mr. HUGHES, April 15, 1722.
— MS.

reputation as an historian as far as the revolution, where his history ends. TINDAL's *Continuation* is worth reading; but it is a tedious heavy work, and spun out merely to get money. The subscribers, of which I was one, thought themselves ill used and imposed upon by him. However, if it should come in your way, you may receive information from it. But for a short view of english history, of that period which is most important to us, I think none is equal to Bishop BURNET's *History of his own Time*; and for a short abstract WELWOOD's *Memoirs*.

I thank God, I am as comfortable, as to my health, as I can expect to be. Here is my state from an old writer: "Multâ cautelâ custoditur salus corporis; custodita, cito amittitur; amissa, cum gravi labore reparatur; et tamen reparata, semper in dubio est." I feel the meaning of this description. May

my spirit feel the good effect it should have upon me ! I heartily wish you increasing comfort and success in your great work. Now is the time, when you have little parochial duty, to apply closely to study, and increase your stock of critical, scriptural, and practical knowledge, that if Providence should call you out to a larger and more public station, and a greater sphere of usefulness,* you may be qualified for it, and equal to it.

I am, Dear Sir,
Your affectionate and faithful
friend, and humble servant,
JOB ORTON.

LETTER

* Which it hath since done : and in the town and parish, where this good man was born, and where for so many years he exercised his faithful ministry.

LETTER XX.

DEAR SIR,

May 22, 1776.

As you have PALMER's *Abridgment of BAXTER's Reformed Pastor*,* you can need no further advice from me about your parishioners. I think that book is *instar omnium* on the subject. You will no doubt, call at every house in your parish, and make prudent inquiries into their state; whether they attend the church and sacrament, have prayer in their families, catechise their children, and take pains with their servants. It is easier to preach acceptably at such places as B **, than to converse intelligibly and profitably with country-families. A late author (I forget whom) saith, St.

• Price two shillings and sixpence.

ANTHONY's *preaching to the pigs*, (according to the popish legend) was only *preaching to country-farmers*. But as the gospel is adapted to them, I pray God, you may be instrumental in carrying it to their hearts.

I do not think MACKNIGHT on *the Gospels* (tho' a very useful, judicious book) will do for Mr. * * to read in his family. I make use of Mr. HENRY's *Exposition* or Dr. DODDRIDGE's *Expositor* in mine. When I read the latter, my family have their bibles in their hands, and I desire them to turn to that evangelist, whose account is most large in the section. Some persons read only the text and improvement in their families, as Dr. ADAMS, &c. — What I say in my *Religious Exercises*,* (p. 144.) is, "I would

* *Religious Exercises Recommended*, second edition, price 3s. — "These sermons, (say the Monthly

would inculcate upon all families, where it can be performed, the use of Psalmody :" and then I give my reasons ; meaning, where it can be performed *decently*, by a sufficient number, and capable of tolerable singing ; and *prudently*, on account of the situation and vicinity. Is there any thing to be objected to in this ? Mr. * * * is mistaken as to what he says of

o 3 singing

Monthly Reviewers) are not distinguished by any remarkable elegance of style, or accuracy of language and composition ; but they have a much truer recommendation : they are serious and practical ; well adapted to do real service to every attentive reader, and evidently flowing from a heart under the warm influences of benevolence and piety." — After some other encomiums, the same writers add, " We are persuaded that the present work is calculated to produce real advantage to mankind ; and we sincerely join our wishes with those of the author, that it may contribute to revive and promote the cause of true religion, with which the interests of virtue and morality are essentially connected." — *Acc.*

singing *low*: it may be quite harmonious, and yet no louder than the common key of reading. One or two facts are worth a thousand theories and suppositions. I have always lived in families where singing was used. And I never found nor heard of any inconveniences attending the practice of it in my father's family, at *Shrewsbury*, though he lived in a narrow street, and which was the greatest thoroughfare in the town; or in either of Dr. *DODDRIDGE*'s houses at *Northampton*, or at my own house at *Shrewsbury*, or many other houses here. One may have a worse opinion of men than they deserve. And let religious families first make a trial, and then proceed, or drop the exercise, as they find it convenient or otherwise. "Let not your good be evil spoken of," is an excellent rule. But if what is good in itself must be omitted for fear of that, there

there is an end of all goodness. A pious farmer of my congregation used to sing, as well as read and pray in his family. His reprobate landlord, who lived near him, hath come by with his rakish companions, and contrasted the psalm with a horse-laugh, and an indecent song. The 'squire's son, who is now a serious man, hath acknowledged to the farmer's widow, that the conduct of his father and Co. shocked him when a boy ; and that the steadiness of the farmer and his consistent behaviour in all other instances, had a great influence in giving his mind a serious turn. When vice is bold, it is sad that virtue should be sneaking. Till I see or hear of some well attested instances, in which the credit of religion has suffered by singing in families, consistently religious, the passage must stand. See the preface p. viii. ix.

It is many years since I read **WATTS** on the *Love of God*, and I have not the book now by me. Dr. **WATTS**'s Treatises, Hymns, &c. on that subject, do not suit me. He is too much of an *enamorato*, and this has been the sole objection I have heard against this piece. I do not love fulsome, luscious divinity. And the good doctor allowed in his preface to **Mrs. ROWE**'s *Devout Exercises*, that many of his composures in younger life were of that kind, which his maturer judgment disapproved.* *The passions in our frame*

* "Let it be observed, that it was much the fashion, even among some divines of eminence in former years, to express the fervours of devout love to our Saviour in the style of the *Song of Solomon*: and I must confess, that several of my composures in verse, written in younger life, were led by those examples unwarily into this track. But if I may be permitted to speak the sense of mature age, I can hardly think this the

frame should be consecrated to God, and it is desirable our devotion and love to him should be fervent; but as there is so much of the *animal* in them, and men have different constitutions and relishes, too much stress must not be laid upon them.*

When

the happiest language in which christians should generally discover their warm sentiments of religion, since the clearer and more spiritual revelations of the New Testament."

* It is observed in the Life of Mr. HENRY GROVE, a learned and judicious divine among the dissenters, and who was Dr. WATTS's intimate friend; — that " he knew also to preserve his devotion *pure* from the *amorous*, thinking the sentiments and language of a sensual passion very unfit to be addressed to the great God, or his Son; and that the indulging this as divine love had greatly corrupted religion. In his most juvenile performances there is but little of this strain, and as his judgment improved he wholly omitted it. Mr. GROVE thought divine love to be the love of a *character* supremely wise, holy and good; and to be most fitly expressed, not by

the

When I had the pleasure of seeing our friend Mr. * *, I was afraid lest publick concerns should have injured his health, or disturbed the composure of his mind. But perhaps, were we to decline attending to such concerns, and confine ourselves wholly to the duties of our families, and functions, our minds might be ready to prey upon *themselves* for want of variety, and through a constant attachment to one track of thought and action. While Providence has favoured him with almost

the fond language of the animal passion, but by an exalted veneration of these excellencies, and a delightful contemplating them ; by the steady choice and pursuit of true goodness, by a cheerful obedience to the divine commands, and an imitation of the moral perfections we admire."

Speaking of another treatise of Dr. WATTS, Mr. ORTON thus writes : — " If you have not Dr. WATTS's *Orthodoxy and Charity united*, I wish you could procure it : as perhaps it gives the best idea of orthodoxy, without verging to antinomianism, that I ever saw."

almost every domestic comfort to so high a degree, and given him so much skill, reputation, and success in his professional capacity, it would grieve one to find, that his benevolent concern and attempts for the good of mankind impaired his health or prevented him from relishing so many other enjoyments. Great caution and steadiness are necessary, that we suffer not in these particulars ; and I have peculiar reason to give the hint to every friend I love, as I have suffered so much myself by not attending to it.

My two volumes of *Sermons on Practical Subjects*,* were advertised a few days ago. I wish they may do good. The more I see of many modern

* The sermons are thirty-six in number, and testify, in the strongest manner, the ardent solicitude with which the author endeavoured to inspire mankind with the principles of piety and virtue. — *Account:*

modern sermons the less I like them ; and the less I think they are calculated for usefulness. I would willingly write modern sense and accuracy, with the ancient simplicity, pungency, and evangelical strain.

I have just been perusing an account of the donation of a missal to a college of popish priests ; under the title of which the donor had written, " When you read this, pray for the soul of A. B. who gave it." So I say in the protestant sense at cloſing this letter.

Your's affectionately,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. I do not think you too free in desiring the favour of me to revise the sermon* you intend to print : I wish you do not think me too free in

* The Country Clergyman's Advice to his Parishioners : preached in the parish church of Wormington, in Glouceſterſhire, March 31, 1776. Second edition, price 3d.

the remarks I have sent you upon it. I submit it to your consideration, whether it may be proper to print it at present, or some time hence, when you will be better acquainted with your parishioners, and they with you. I do not say with HORACE, *nonumque prematur in annum*; but would read (with Dr. BYROM) *unumque*.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

DEAR SIR,

August, 1776.

I BEGAN to think it long till I heard from Mr. * * *, who is visiting his friends in *London*. I was ready to suspect that the air of the metropolis had had the same effect upon him as it hath upon most of my friends and correspondents, who live within its influence. They reside in the centre of intelligence, relating to literary, political, and ecclesiastical affairs, whilst I am thrown into an obscure corner, out of the way and knowledge of any one of them. Yet I enter so deeply into the concerns of my fellow-creatures, that I am eager to know how the world goeth on: but they will not indulge my curiosity, though they can most

most of them do it fully in a quarter of an hour's time by the use of short-hand. I must therefore be content, and value those few, very few, real friends so much the more ; who, like Mr. * * *, reckon themselves in debt from the receipt of a letter till it is answered, and cannot be easy, till they have cleared the account.* Indeed I can send them no intelligence from hence ; it would therefore be more kind in them, by their correspondence, to make up the deficiency. I see more and more reason, the longer I live in the world, to apply to myself part of Dr. KING's epitaph :

If

Permuitos habui amicos,
At veros, stabiles, gratos,
Perpaucissimos.

* Fain would I inculcate upon my younger friends and brethren the maxim of GANGANELLI : " If the lowest of the people, says he, writes to me, I esteem it an honour, and should think myself very blameable and ill mannered, if I were not to answer him." — Mr. ORTON.

If you should think it worth your while to write to Mr. *, concerning his remarks on your printed sermon, pray cut the matter short, and tell him, you allow him the right of private judgment, and of preaching agreeably to what he apprehends to be the meaning of the word of God, and that you expect he will allow you the same: and that to censure and condemn his christian brethren for thinking and preaching differently from himself, is as contrary to reason, good manners, and especially the word of God, as any heresy or vice whatsoever. Whether a man will be condemned hereafter for preaching and thinking differently from me may be doubtful, and is an affair in which I have nothing to do. But I am sure, a man will be condemned for a bitter, uncharitable and censorious spirit, if I understand the terms of salvation, as laid down in the gospel.

gospel. See the beginning of the seventh chapter of St. *Matthew*. — You are acquainted with Mr. *, who has some such a troublesome neighbour, as your letter describes * to be. He has already done him much mischief; and will, I fear, injure his comfort and usefulness. A highwayman robs me of my purse; and there is an end perhaps of the business, of his oaths, and his injustice to me. A christian brother robs me of my esteem, reputation, peace, comfort, and usefulness; and at the same time lifts up his hands and eyes to heaven, and seems to say, “Let the Lord be glorified.” If you are at a loss to know which is the greatest — of the two, and most deserves to be —, I will tell you in my next.

There is a great deal to be learnt from Dr. CLARKE’s *Works*, and therefore they ought, and deserve to be

read carefully. I have most of them, and have often read them. His sermons, which I have lately gone over again, are all sensible and judicious ; and he has an excellent collection of parallel texts and good definitions of words and things ; though with respect to the former, often more than is needful to explain his meaning. The applications of his sermons are too short, and want pathos. This he lamented himself, but could not alter his method, as his cool philosophical head would not admit that warmth and *unction* (as the french call it) which is very desirable in an application. He was no socinian, and is much more evangelical than most of his admirers. His *Paraphrase upon the Evangelists* appears to me to drop short of the true design of the evangelists in many passages, but contains many excellent things. His translation and notes upon

ROHAULT

ROHAULT I have not read, since I was at the academy, but his other tracts I am better acquainted with. He, like many others, gives what I think a wrong idea of baptism, and lays too much stress upon it, and the circumstances of it. I find the same fault with some things in SHERLOCK's book *upon Death*, which I have lately been reading again with great pleasure, and I hope some profit. Dr. CLARKE's Life by Bishop HOADLEY is excellently well written.

I have procured the Bishop of CORK's* *Sermons*, recommended to me by Dr. STONHOUSE, and have read several of them. His style is manly and easy; but as they are levelled principally against the Socinians, they are rather dry and controversial, than serious and practical. But I hope to be better acquainted with him soon, and that I shall find some things more

plain and practical in the other discourses.* He was the author of a deep metaphysical treatise on the "Procedure and Limits of the Human Understanding;" which my understanding, being so limited, could never comprehend. He published likewise a small tract against the reigning toast in *Irelana* — "To the immortal memory of KING WILLIAM," as if it were praying for the dead. The consequence of which was, that the Whigs were used to add to their toast — "in spite of the Bishop of CORK." I will send you his sermons when an opportunity offers for that purpose.

"What a world do we live in!" exclaims Mr. ***. Ay; in truth, it is bad enough; so our fathers, grandfathers, &c. since *Adam* found it.† That

* He is a very practical writer.

† In such a world as this is, we must not expect every thing, nor many things quite agreeable:

That is not a reason, as I tell him, why we *should not*, but why we *should*, endeavour to make it better; and never relax in matters of duty, conscience, and attempts to do good. I hope he will not be discouraged. “ Do what you can, whether men will hear or forbear,” is our rule; and it shall turn to us for a testimony. May God keep up the ardour of our spirits, amidst so many chilling circumstances, and favour all our pious attempts !

I shall rank Miss *** among my heroines, as I doubt not our Master

P 3.

will

able. How would our virtue be exercised and improved, and we trained up for rest, but by some painful discipline ? I often think of honest *Sancho Panca*, when *Don Quixote* asked him the success of his commission, and whether they should mark the day with a *black* or a *white* stone ; replied, “ Truly, sir, if you will be ruled by me, with neither ; but with good *brown ochre*.” Such is life, and it becomes us to make ourselves easy, and not aggravate evils. — Mr. ORTON.

will among his, if she continue, (as I pray God she may) to reverence conscience and scripture, and to scorn the scorners. (Prov. iii. 34.) She will shine in a noble assembly a thousand and ten thousand years hence, when the gay folk of this world, will arise to shame and everlasting contempt.

The sudden changes of the weather have affected me much. This day se'nnight FARENHEIT's thermometer was at 76; yesterday and to-day at 56 and 57. What human frame, but must be in some degree affected by so great a variation. My spirits this week have rose as high as alacrity: but when they get down to dejection and fear, it is very uncomfortable. With such changes and sensations God is pleased to exercise us poor mortals, “to make our hearts better.” I wish

I could

I could more clearly see this end answering in my own case.

I am

Your's affectionately,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. Mr. WHISTON, (whom you speak of) I once spent an hour or two with, and was much pleased to see and converse with the honest old man; though I remember his great confidence displeased me. He was walking from *London* into *Rutlandshire*, where his son-in-law lived, and where he himself died, and he called and break-fasted at Dr. DODDRIDGE'S at *Northampton*.

LETTER XXII.

DEAR SIR,

May, 1777.

It gives me a very sensible pleasure to find, that my letter was agreeable to Mr. * * *, and any way contributed to alleviate his sorrows. To weep with them that weep, and to comfort them that mourn, are most amiable, as well as essential duties of our holy religion; and I have been so long in the school of affliction myself, that I hope I have learned, at least, these lessons in it; though I find, and much lament it, that, among many eager and florid professors of religion, there is a great want of sensibility and tenderness. Amidst their zeal for notions, terms, and phrases,

phrases, there is something wanting to sweeten and soften their spirits, and open their narrow hearts to that compassion and feeling for others, which is the glory of the man and the christian. In short, there are many brutes upon two legs: and woe to him, who is dependent upon them, or connected with them! — I am somewhat concerned, that copies of my Letter have been given to others, as it was written very hastily, from the fulness of a sympathizing heart; and I can hardly now recollect a thought or expression in it; but if it affords any consolation to my companions in affliction, I shall rejoice. If its contents had any thing of propriety and suitableness in them, it arose entirely from hence, that I was much affected with the occasion, and warmed with the subject; and the passions, you know, are always eloquent. I wish ministers would

would attend to this thought, and see that their own hearts be first deeply impressed; then they will speak as they ought — a word in season, both in the pulpit and in the parlour.

I have been reading Dr. CAMP-BELL's *Fast-Sermon*,* which pleases me much, and is, I think, calculated to do great good. I wish it were printed in a cheap form to give away among the people in general.† Surely, some of our loyalists will be at the expence of doing this, when the patriots (as they call themselves) are at so much pains and expence to reprint, translate, and disperse Dr. PRICE's *Observations on Civil Liberty*. I shall recommend it to

* On the Nature, Extent, and Importance of the Duty of Allegiance.

† This was afterwards done, by the encouragement of Dr. TUCKER, Dean of Gloucester; and great numbers were dispersed through *England* and *America*.

all those, with whom I have any acquaintance. But I hope the nation is growing wiser, calmer, and more loyal. I know few dissenting ministers, (except in *London, Bristol*, and some other populous places) but who are loyal, and blame the violence of the *Americans* and their abettors. All my neighbouring brethren, as far as I can judge, are among the quiet in the land.

I attend to Dr. * *'s observation about the *Magdalene Hospital*. There is no evidence in the New Testament, that *Mary Magdalene* was a notorious sinner. On the contrary, she was a pious lady of quality, who had been troubled with an epilepsy, or some disorder, which the Jews used to impute to the agency of one, two, three, or more demons, according to its strength and virulence. Nor is there any proof, that *she* was the woman, who had been a sinner, and

washed

washed the feet of Christ. See DODDRIDGE on the place. Dr. LARDNER published a small tract to shew how absurdly the prostitutes' hospital was called the *Magdalene House*, and what reflection it threw on the name and memory of *Mary Magdalene*; but notwithstanding what he said on the subject, it continued to be called by that name.

— If the scheme of Redemption be represented, as Christ's prevailing upon the Father to shew mercy and confer favour to his creatures, who was always ready and disposed to do it, it is a very false and unscriptural scheme. But what is more common, than for a parent to forgive a child at the intercession of a common friend, when the parent is disposed to do it; is glad of such an intercessor, that he might not punish; and desires or appoints such a person to

befflaw

to interpose, that he might secure his authority, and the child's reverence; and not lead him to think, he does not see his dislike, or will easily pass by offences committed against him. Let me advise you to read TOMKINS's *Christ the Mediator* again and again, till you have well digested his scheme. It contains the best defence and explanation of the atonement I ever met with, and fully confutes all the Socinian writers.*

God

* "Jesus Christ the Mediator between God and Man, an Advocate for us with the Father, and a Propitiation for the sins of the world. Second edition; to which is now added, by another gentleman, an essay to prove the credibility of the gospel, from the doctrine of the efficacy of Christ's death for the redemption of the world. *London, 1761.*—This is a very sensible performance (by Mr. TOMKINS), in which the author endeavours to establish the literal sense of those passages in scripture which concern our redemption by Christ; he looks upon the death of Christ as a real sacrifice, and represents the notion the scripture

God is merciful to our land in giving us fine refreshing showers, which have put a new face on this dry part of the country. But they affect my feeble constitution, and I have been very languid and low, though every place and being around me, since this change of weather, smiles and rejoices. May I grow more fit for the world of everlasting spring and health, holiness and joy! Continue your prayers for me. I am

Your affectionate and faithful

friend, and humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. Bishop

scripture gives us of these things as consistent with the dictates of reason and natural religion."

— See the present Bishop of LANDAFF's (Dr. WATSON) catalogue of books in divinity, at the conclusion of the sixth volume of his Theological Tracts. — See also a *Letter from a clergyman to one of his parishioners, on the doctrine of the Atonement*: printed by Messrs. EDDOWES of Shrewsbury, in 1790.

P. S. Bishop NORTH preached a sermon for our charity-school, last Sunday. I did not hear him, for I cannot bear crowds, and have not itching ears. I am told it was a pertinent and useful discourse.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

DEAR SIR,

July 5, 1777.

I COULD not open your last letter without tearing away at the same time a part of the writing contained in it, which is bad, especially when written in short-hand: therefore it is best, when you have gotten down to the bottom of the first page of your paper, to turn to the next, that is, the back of that, and not to go on obliquely, as you have done in this letter. Always take care to leave that part of the paper, where the seal is to be, *blank*, that the writing may not be torn. I had a letter from a friend lately, who desired me to transact a little business for him, which was the chief purport of his letter; but he had unfortunately put the

the wafer on the most material part of the commission, so that I could not know what he had desired me to do for him. — This, you will say, is an odd kind of an introduction to a letter: but I have heard worse, and less pertinent introductions to many sermons. I have often admired the character, which a great lady in *France*, once gave to one of the officers of that court — “that he was excellent at little things.” There is more in this than most people are aware of.

I have sent you CHANDLER’s *Paraphrase on the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, &c.* which I wish you to read carefully, as it will enlarge your mind and ideas. He has some valuable criticisms, but they are not all equally satisfactory. I would not have you preach in his style and manner, but you will do well to imitate his strong sense and good reasoning in plainer language; and there are

some very excellent and striking remarks in his practical reflections.

I have read Miss MORE's *Essays to Young Ladies*, with which I am very much pleased; as containing excellent prudential cautions, and admirable religious maxims. She writes so well, so usefully, and with such a strong tincture of rational and manly piety, that I would have every reader enter fully into her sentiments and advices, which are adapted to do much good.

BLAIR's *Sermons* are indeed judicious, lively, elegant, and evangelical; but not sufficiently plain, I think, for common readers. I hope they will be of much service among the judicious and polite, who will probably be inclined to read them.

I had a letter lately from Dr. STONHOUSE: a part of my answer to which was as follows. "I have rode out several times this week; as I hope you

you have done. It is good for your health: it is also good for one's temper. I have often found the benefit of this receipt :

"Tis better, friend, to labour than to fret;
To cure the spleen, there's nothing like a sweat.
When times are bad, and neighbours never worse,
Men, manners to reform, come, take your horse,
A mile reforms them: but if aught remain*
Unpurg'd, 'tis but to ride as far again.*

I have lately lost a valuable friend here; which event has much depressed my spirits. I am just returned from an excursion into *Staffordshire*, about three miles off, and find my spirits better: so that I hope to be able to-day to visit the afflicted widow and family."

— I am pleased and thankful that I am quiet here, and that I can (as I think St. JEROM says) retire to my *Tugurium*,† and bless God, that I dare

Q. 2

sleep

* See likewise the *Spectator*, No. 115.

† A Cottage, a house in the country, &c.

Pauperis tugurii culmen.

Virgil.

sleep when I can, and say, that aught is my own; and there deplore my barren ministry for thirty years almost; and implore the blessing of heaven upon the world and the church.— I am better and worse, as to my health, as usual, but it never verges to the borders of being well. But when a man is turned of *sixty*, he must expect to sink and decay. Some noted writer of antiquity says,— “ It is unbecoming a man, when arrived to that age, to hold out his hand to a physician to feel his pulse. He should be content to march off the stage.” I wish I could do more in the devotional way; but I trust, that He who knows our frame, will accept a willing mind, and honest intentions to serve his sacred cause. I am

Your affectionate,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. I

P. S. I am concerned, lest you should injure your health by too close an application to your studies. Walk out often ; and when you write or read, be sure to keep yourself in as upright a posture as you can. Write upon an inclined plane ; but a standing desk is best. Nothing is more injurious to the health of young divines and students, than *stooping*.*

Q 3

LETTER

* “ The attitude of a man at study, says Dr. TISSOT, cannot but be prejudicial to health. The folds which the vessels are thrown into at the top of the thigh and in the bend of the knees, while a man is *sitting*, interrupt the circulation in the lower extremities, which in process of time must necessarily suffer from this circumstance ; the bending of the body constrains the abdominal viscera, disturbs their functions, and the digestive powers are disordered from a new cause.—Frictions are also of much use, and not to be neglected. If every morning, we rub the whole body, perspiration is encouraged, and the circulation quickened ; which is indeed so much accelerated

LETTER XXIV.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE a miscellany to send you, and it is some comfort to me, that it will cost you nothing in postage.

I can make great allowance for the little indiscretions of Mr. * * *, as he is so young a man. He knew the great sensibility and delicacy of Mr. * *, and therefore should have said nothing of the business which he communicated to him. We must deal cautiously with persons

accelerated by strong frictions continued for a long time, that in some degree they may supply the want of exercise. The ancients, who were sensible of all the advantages resulting from this practice, not only used it as a remedy, but also as a daily method of preserving health." — Dr. TISSOT on the Diseases incident to Literary and Sedentary Persons, p. 65, 174, second edition.

persons of his scrupulosity and exactness, and especially never divulge, or give the most distant intimation of what they wish to have concealed. It may appear to us a trifle ; but if it seems important to them, that is a sufficient reason, why we should be upon our guard. And it is best always to err on that hand, and to be particularly solicitous not to utter every thing one may hear from a friend. We ought to suppose, he speaks to us in confidence, though there may be no express charge or seeming desire of secrecy. If a person, for whom we have a great regard, shews us any particular attention, and concern for our service and interest, it is highly proper to thank God for it, and to shew them all gratitude ; but to say as little of it as may be to others. — As Dr. FORDYCE's *Addresses to Young Men*, which I am reading, (in which,

amidst great pomposity of language, and studied antitheses, there is much good sense, and advice suited to their case) and which now lie before me, and your young friend may not have seen them, I will transcribe a passage from them, which you may communicate to him, or not, as you think proper. — “ From a consciousness of “ right intentions, from the honest “ ardour of their natures, from the “ apprehensive simplicity so incident “ to generous minds, they are apt to “ forget certain forms, ceremonies, “ and precautions. These, however “ small in themselves, have often a “ mighty stroke in the affairs of life, “ and especially go further, as they “ are observed or neglected, to escape “ or incur censure, to obtain or for- “ feit praise, than the inexperienced “ or incautious will easily conceive. “ It is much to be regretted, that “ some

“ some excellen’t spirits fail of appear-
“ ing excellent in a number of cases,
“ for want of these inferior attentions,
“ which ought by no means to be
“ omitted, &c.” Vol. I. p. 101.

I am glad you are pleased with the small present I made you of my *Sacramental Meditations*. I wish for your prayers, that they may be instrumental in doing good. Most of your books, and ours, on the Lord’s Supper, are too dry and systematick, and not enough of the plain and the devotional kind. Many worthy and religious persons have often complained to me, that they could not fix their thoughts on these occasions, for want of some subjects of meditation ; especially some texts of scripture, which would naturally bring the thoughts to their minds. A general meditation, without being grounded on some text, was by no means so agreeable and profitable.

profitable. These Meditations were delivered before, and after, the administration of that ordinance. — I think my printing work is now done.* I hope,

* This was Mr. ORTON's last publication: relative to which the editor of these Letters begs leave to subjoin the following testimonies borne to it.

The late Rev. Mr. HUNTER, vicar of Weaverham, in Cheshire, the author of several valuable publications, wrote thus of it to a friend. — “Upon your recommendation, I have ordered and repeatedly read Mr. ORTON's *Sacramental Meditations*. I think I never read a book better calculated for the purposes of spiritual improvement. The shortness of the sections, the plainness of the style, the clearness of the method, render it peculiarly fit for the reading and retention of the uninstructed in low, and the indolent in high life; whilst a flow of piety, an apt and happy application of scripture, an experimental sense of religion, and a profound knowledge of the divine life, and of the deep things of God, must recommend it to the perusal and approbation of those who have made the greatest progress in goodness.”

Dr.

hope, I am thankful for the acceptance, and I trust, usefulness, with which some of my publications have been honoured. Other authors have a more shining province, in learned, ingenious, and philosophical pieces. I am content with doing good to souls.

What

Dr. TUCKER, the late venerable *Dean of Gloucester*, wrote of it to the same person in the following manner.—“ Pray thank Mr. ORTON for his book in my name. I am charmed, and I hope edified too with it; which I make my constant companion. As I read, I am delighted to find the great divine, and the able controversialist, concealing himself under the better character of the pious and humble christian, and avoiding all the parade of human learning. A man who was less a scholar, and less a christian, would have stuffed his book with a thousand quotations.”

The late excellent Dr. ADAMS, Master of *Pembroke College, Oxford*, in a letter to Mr. ORTON writes thus; — “ The design of your book was quite new to me, and is I think, happily executed. In our large communions,

(such

What will become of my *Expositions on the Old Testament* I know not. I fear the plan I proposed for interweaving them with CLARK's notes, in the manner of WHITBY and DODDRIDGE, adding a practical improvement at the end of each chapter, will not be executed. I wish it may; but I can do nothing to it myself; and the person from whom I hoped for the execution will not, I fear, attempt it, though he hath strength and ability of body and mind to do it soon, and do it well.

(such as I have often seen at St. *Chad's*) it is the very book I should wish in every one's hands. The *Dean of Gloucester* is much pleased with it, as he is indeed with all your writings. You have perhaps done more good of the best sort, under the necessity of retirement, than you could have done in better health, which universally brings dissipation along with it. This is a consolation of the highest and noblest kind, which I am persuaded you have a right to, and I hope God will in your weakest hours enable you to take to yourself."

well. I must leave it to Providence, and those who may come after me.*

Dr. TAYLOR's *Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans*, is an elaborate and learned work, containing many excellent things, and many important and valuable criticisms, and well deserves your careful perusal; but I think he has too much limited the Apostle's sense.

* In the course of Mr. ORTON's ministerial service, he delivered a short and plain Exposition of the Old Testament, with devotional and practical reflections; which exposition and reflections have recently been published, from the author's manuscripts, for the use of families, by the (late) Reverend ROBERT GENTLEMAN, of Kidderminster, Worcestershire, in six large volumes, octavo, price 1l. 16s. This work has met with a very favourable reception from the pious world, and is calculated for general utility. Of the notes it cannot be said that they are eminently critical; but they often convey valuable instruction; and the reflections are admirably adapted to promote the purpose of serious religion. — KIPPIE's *Accounts*.

sense. Few persons have ever studied the bible more than he, or have been better acquainted with scriptural phraseology; but he was too much warped by his own theories. You will find many good remarks upon this performance in DODDRIDGE's preface to the second edition of his Sermons on Regeneration. —— His *Key to the Apostolic Writings* is prefixed to his paraphrase, and is designed to explain the chief phrases made use of in the Epistles; but which he appears to me to have mistaken in many instances. Though I do not like his general scheme on the *Romans* and his *Key*,* yet his notion of the doctrine of election seems right and scriptural.

I question

* “ I shall be glad that Mr. (afterwards Dr.) TAYLOR, if he be recovered, may bestow his time and labours on unlocking hebrew words, and hope the key he has left broken in the door of St. Paul's Epistles, will not be able to keep the

I question whether Dr. DODDRIDGE'S *Sermons against Popery* will ever be published. — What the doctor says of Mr. GROVE as a writer is, that “ he resembles WATTS, but is not equally poetical ; that he has many judicious and new thoughts ; with great seriousness and sweetnes.” — Bishop BURNETT'S *Conclusion of the History of his own Times*, was printed separately in a small form a few years ago, and many of them sold. I scarce know a book better calculated to do good. — HILDROP'S *Miscellanies* are entertaining, and may furnish you with some materials in your addresses to your *Wormington farmers*. — REEVES'S

Apologies

the true sense quite shut up : indeed I think the door opens almost of its own accord.” — Dr. DODDRIDGE, to Dr. WOOD. See *Letters to and from Dr. DODDRIDGE*, published by THOMAS STEDMAN, M. A. vicar of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury, p. 303.

Apologies of the Fathers, in two volumes octavo, is a valuable translation of several important books. — Have you ever seen *Short Meditations on Select Portions of Scripture*?* If not, I recommend it to you, as containing the substance of the heads and principal thoughts of about fifty excellent sermons.

Judge ASHURST is, I presume, of the same family, as Sir HENRY and Sir SAMUEL ASHURST; who were both of them men of eminent wisdom and piety. Sir HENRY ASHURST wrote the life of Mr. NATHANIEL HEYWOOD, an ejected minister in Lancashire; so fond was he of him.

Your advice to me to *eat my own book*, is very good. But I daily stand corrected by my own publications, as it is easier to give advice than to take it.

* By the Rev. DANIEL TURNER, of Abingdon, Berks

it. The hot weather hurts me; and now this cool damp air hurts me again. So subject am I to skyey influences, and the sport of every paltry atom.* But be the weather fair or foul, the ship is still under sail, near the port: and may it be the haven, where I would be!

Yours affectionately,
JOB ORTON.

VOL. I. R LETTER

P. S. November 29, 1777. The day of the month my good father died, thirty-six years ago; who had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself (iii John, 12.) I wish I were more like him.†

* The Ascarides.

† "His grandfather and father, who were grocers at Shrewsbury, of considerable property, were justly held in estimation for their piety, their good sense, their generosity, their usefulness, and their christian virtues in general. His father died Nov. 18, 1741. — Dr. KIPPIS's Account.

LETTER XXV.

DEAR SIR,

March, 1778.

THOUGH there is nothing in your last letter which requires an immediate answer, yet I am willing to write to so punctual a correspondent.

I have been looking over SAL-LUST's *History of Cataline's Conspiracy*; in which I think you will find some things suitable to your purpose, particularly in his speech to the conspirators; which you will meet with towards the beginning of the history: where he pleads *liberty*, as a ground for his undertaking; but mentions honour, power, wealth, &c. as also in their plan, and throws out some bitter reflections against the ministers and placemen

placemen of those days. — *Quin igitur expurgiscimini? En illa, illa, quam s̄epe optastis, Libertas; præterea divitiae, decus, gloria in oculis sita sunt, &c.* In my edition, is the following note on the word *Libertas*. *Tacitus* vere (lib. 9. Annal.) *falso libertatis vocabulū obtendi ab iis, qui privatim degeneres, in publicum exitiosi, nihil spei, nisi per discordias, habeant.* *Graſw.* one of the *variorum* authors. — There is a great deal to the same purpose in *Cataline's* speech, and in other parts of the history; but it is near forty years ago since I last read it, which was with the pupils at *Northampton*, in 1739. I have long thought there are many passages in the account of that conspiracy, very parallel to the present case of our nation, between loyal men, and those who are called patriots, and who choose by a figure of speech, to call themselves whigs,

whigs, just as they call me a tory.* Many are angry with me, because I discountenance their disloyalty; but I despise their anger, as much as I dislike their principles and conduct. I would willingly be doing some good while I am here; and to promote loyalty, subjection, and peace, is doing good. I think I have already softened some sharp spirits amongst us, at least brought them to hold their tongues, or to be less confident. — The KING, I fear, hath an unfavourable opinion of the dissenters; for which we have foolishly given too much reason. — I shall be sorry to find that your neighbour Mr. **, exposes himself and his ministry by his politicks. An ancient bishop says, “ What hath an ecclesiastick

• In moderation placing all my glory,
While Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory.

POPE.

astick to do with politicks?* Lend him PALMER's *Abridgment of BAXTER's Reformed Pastor.*

How can we be *guilty by nature*, according to Mr. * * *'s ideas of original sin, since guilt is a consciousness of having acted wrong? Our guilt and misery consist in having finned, or in consequence of our sins. *Jeremiah* calls children *innocents*, *Jer. ii. 34.* and *Christ* says, except ye be converted and become *as little children*, &c. *Matt. xviii. 3.* I cannot reconcile

R 3 these

* “I have no politicks, but that of taking care to be engaged in none.” — *GANGANELLI.*

“Be careful not to be occupied too much with secular affairs: those ecclesiasticks who have been so engaged, have never yet found it the way to procure esteem: they are indeed sought after, and consulted; but they are not really respected: we think, with reason, that their function should be sacred.”

Bishop *BURNET* says, — “A clergyman's friends and his garden ought to be his chief diversions; as his study and parish ought to be his chief employments.”

these passages, and many more, with the high notions of some persons concerning the doctrine of original sin. What I understand by that doctrine is, (and which I take to be a fact) that as we are born with less perfect constitutions, so the passions are stronger and less governable, and thereby we are more easily led into sin. I have known so many instances, in which persons have excused their sins and bad tempers, by pleading original sin, that I would be extremely cautious, how I gave the most distant encouragement to such absurd and dangerous pleas. — So likewise by *assurance*, I mean only a satisfactory evidence, removing all painful fears and doubts, though not every slight suspicion. See MASON on *Self Knowledge*, part 1. ch. xviii. and BENNET's *Christian Oratory*, sect. 2. p. 569. —

“ Mr. *** does not know the fact
of

of the *Spirit's sealing, comforting influence.*" The only difference between us is, that he thinks it cannot be particularly *known* to be the work of the Spirit, though he allows it to be so. I think, that in some cases it may be known; and the lives of some of the best and most rational christians shew, that they thought they could distinguish between a divine impression, and the natural workings of their own minds. Many texts I think encourage this thought, especially the following, *Rom. viii. 16. 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5. Eph. i. 13.*

My *Book of Almanacks* is of no great consequence. The Almanack I make use of is *WING's*, which I think one of the best. There I keep a journal of the weather, and insert who preached the charity-sermons, here and at *Shrewsbury*, and what was collected; also any particular occurrence relating

to the town. I also make references in it to the birth-days of some of my friends ; not that I may drink their health, but pray for them.* I find it of some use to have recourse to this, as to dates and times. And it is an amusement, and attended with some advantage to take a transient survey of past occurrences. I will give you a specimen of the memorandums of the last month. — “ Feb. 5th, Mr. Y ** died — a friend of mine at W ** *. — 9th, The day sister S ** died — to be thankful for her piety and usefulness — and to pray for her family. — 14th, My nephew B. S **'s birth-day — to pray for him. — 21st, Public fast. — 23d, Mr. T ** died, one of my former hearers. — 24th, J. S **'s birth-day — to pray for

* It afforded the editor great pleasure to find his name inserted frequently among these memoranda.

for him. — 25th, W. S **, a relation of mine, died." — This is the diary I keep.* Dr. DODDRIDGE, as far as I can recollect, (for I have not his diary by me) used particular marks for days well spent, ill spent, and indifferent. But a person may easily contrive any thing of that kind for himself.

Bishop NEWTON's *Dissertations on the Prophecies* are excellent books, and will enrich your interleaved bible with many good interpretations. But his plan upon the Revelation is not, I think, the right one. He and Dr. HALIFAX, who lately published some discourses preached at Bishop WARBURTON's Lecture, both implicitly follow Mr. MEDE. When I was engaged in publishing Dr. DOD-

DRIIDGE'S

* He had kept a more particular one: but what became of it is uncertain. Most probably he destroyed it; fearing lest it should have been made an imprudent use of after his death.

DRIDGE's Expositor on the Revelation, I studied that book as carefully as I could, and I found more consistency and satisfaction in LOWMAN on the Revelation, than any other commentator upon it.

Mr. ROBINSON, the author of the *Plea for the Divinity of Christ*, hath not received a regular education; but is a man of a surprising genius, and vast application. He does not appear to me to understand the controversy about the Trinity; and has misapplied several texts, which I have taken the liberty of pointing out to him. He frequently contradicts himself, being in some parts of his performance a *Sabellian*, while in others he seems to favour the *Athanasian* doctrine. In reality, I take him to be a *Sabellian*, or else I do not understand him. I wish none would meddle with that controversy, but those who understand it.

it. I have read many treatises upon the subject, and some angry and uncharitable ones, whose authors did not understand it, but wrote without any clear ideas. I think Mr. ROBINSON's book will be useful, to shew the difficulty of the point, and to abate the confidence and censoriousness of many.

The death of Dr. ADAMS's amiable nephew is, and will be, a great affliction to his good mother, and uncle. He died of a violent fever at *Oxford*. I wrote a letter of condolance to the doctor on this very mournful occasion.*

Your relations and friends here are well. I bless God I am as well

as

* The following excellent Letter was written by Lady JEAN FERGUSSON to Dr. DODDRIDGE, in answer to one he had sent her on the death of her son, who had been his pupil at *Northampton*: which, as it may be useful to parents, in affording them some important hints in the education of their children, and in comforting

as usual, but find old age gaining upon me by long strides. Continue your prayers for me, that I may be ready

forting those who may be deprived of such valuable blessings, the editor ventures to insert, ~~as~~
as copied from her ladyship's own hand-writing.

Rev. and Dear Sir, Aug. 18, 1750.

The kind expressions of your sympathy with us under our heavy affliction, tho' most tender and affectionate, is no more than I had reason to expect from the great love you had to your dear pupil, and the compassion your benevolent heart ever feels for the distresses of your friends.

Tho' my present depression of spirits makes me very unfit to write to you, yet I know your goodness will excuse incoherence and confusion in one oppressed with sorrow; and I did not chuse to employ any other to write upon a subject which has engrossed my whole thoughts for some months past. I am sensible, I ought not to mourn as those who have no hope, when I have reason for the greatest with regard to my dear child: but it would be the highest stupidity not to be deeply humbled under the mighty hand of God,

ready whenever the summons comes, and that all may be well at last. As a scotch divine said in his dying moments,

God, who by this awful dispensation tells me that I have heinously offended, since I have drawn down such a stroke from the Father of mercies, who does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. He has taken from me Him, who above all my children, was the delight of my eyes, and the joy of my heart ; Him, who for twenty-three years past, has engrossed a great share of my care and tenderness, my hopes and fears : but I ought to be dumb with silence and not open my mouth, because HE has done it, who has wise and holy ends to serve in all his dispensations. Happy will it be for us, if we have a right to those comforts you so kindly administer in your letter. You inquire about my beloved child's behaviour in his last illness, and you have a right to be informed about it, as you were at such pains to instill into his mind right principles and sentiments in every thing becoming a man and a christian ; and your labour was not lost, since it tended to ripen him for another and a better life, as well as to fit him for a useful and honourable

ments, so I would say : " If I do not come up to HENRY's glory, and WATTS's glory, and DODDRIDGE's
glory,

honourable appearance in this, had it pleased God to lengthen his days.

He had a most grateful sense of all your favours, as well as the highest esteem and regard for you, and has often entertained us with an account of your indefatigable labours of various kinds, which would make one wonder how any man had time or strength to go thro' so much. He to the last remembered your affectionate care for him, and the confidence and intimacy you honoured him with, and he mentioned you with tender affection a very few days before he died : he was also very sensible of Mrs. DODDRIDGE's tender and motherly care about him. I mention this only because the natural reserve and modesty of his temper make me imagine he never told you how much he loved you.

It would be needless and improper for me to say any thing of the happy talents he was blessed with, tho' his early capacity and desire for knowledge were indeed surprising. What I have reason to remember with still more pleasure is, that his whole life was free from any gross vice,

glory, I shall be well, if I *win-in** among them."

Your affectionate friend, &c.

JOB ORTON.

* The expression of *winning-in*, is a *scotticism*, and signifies to *get-in*, or rather, to *gain-in*, among them. We use the word for *winning a prize*. So in our translation, *that I may win Christ, *redeem*, gain Christ*, as a treasure, or something extremely valuable. *Phil. iii. 8.*

vice, even those which most children are incident to ; neither can I recollect, that from his earliest infancy I ever heard any indecent or profane words proceed from his mouth. He never liked, when in his best health, those trivial amusements or gay entertainments which other youths are so generally fond of ; insomuch, that I have often told him he was too grave for his age ; but this did not proceed from want of natural sprightliness and vivacity, as you well know ; but I have reason to believe, that he had early presages that his life was not to be long, and therefore spent the small time allotted him to better purposes.

That he had a sincere regard for, and firm belief of our holy religion, I certainly know : that

LETTER XXVI.

DEAR SIR,

September 20, 1778.

It is common for the lawyers, when they prefer a bill in chancery against a person, to crave leave of the chancellor to mend the bill. This I will

that he was a constant advocate for it, and better acquainted with the proofs and principles of it than most young people, you cannot but know, as you were a happy instrument of his instruction: that he had a sincere love and esteem for all good people, however much decryed or undervalued by a profane world, he ever declared. I believe he punctually read the scripture every day; for I remember three years ago, when he was at home with us, that I often looked into his room in a morning, and at every one of these times I found him so employed. He punctually attended publick worship wherever he was; and when at home here last winter, no day was so bad as to keep him from church, and he was much

will endeavour to do with respect to my letter of yesterday; which I wrote in a hurry, as I was not willing to make the messenger wait.

VOL. I. —— I wish much affected by the preaching of the word, even in his childhood.

You will have heard, that he was seized with a fatal hectic fever, attended with much other sore distress at *Wigan*, on his way to the regiment. When he wrote us accounts of this, he did it with so much cheerfulness, that one would have thought him in perfect health; yet the symptoms he mentioned were so bad, that our physician, a very skilful one, told us he believed it impossible we could ever see him again. But it pleased God, mercifully to disappoint him, and to give my child strength to return to us in five days after we got the first accounts of his illness. He often expressed great thankfulness for the divine goodness, which gave him strength for such a journey, which he said he could not have undergone without a supernatural support. I saw him so much weakened, that I had little hopes of his recovery by any human means; but every thing was tried that

— I wish your friend Mr. * * may have an opportunity of reading a discourse, written by Dr. WISHART, principal

that could be of any use to him, and his spirits were supported to the last in remarkable cheerfulness and serenity; insomuch, that I do not think I ever saw him more entertaining and sprightly than he frequently was in his last illness; at the same time he was perfectly sensible of the danger of it, and frequently told both his sisters, who constantly and affectionately attended him, that nothing gave him so much concern as the grief he saw I was in, which, however, we all endeavoured most carefully to conceal from him. To the very last he was frequently observed by all of us to put up ejaculatory petitions, and some part of every day was spent in reading a portion of scripture, and frequently some other useful book. Last year he read and much liked Mr. HERVEY's *Meditations*. At this time your *Sermons on Regeneration* were read to him, which he heard with much pleasure and approbation, as also several of Mr. EVANS's *Sermons*, and often said, there was a great likeness of sentiment and expression between him and the doctor. One remarkable mercy which I cannot but mention with

principal of the college of Edinburgh,
on the *Inefficacy of a Death-Bed Repen-
tance*, or some such title, as it is an excel-
lent

S 2

with thankfulness was, that he never complained of sickness or pain after his return to us, and for the most part slept well in the night. He had indeed a bad cough, and great shortness of breath and weakness, but so great was his patience, that he scarce ever complained, and generally said, he was very well.

He seemed to have no terror or aversion at death: and even when he thought proper to tell me that I must lay my account with it, he did it with the same coolness and seeming unconcern he would have spoke of any other subject. At that very moment he appeared to me so beautiful, had such vivacity in his eyes and bloom in his complexion, that I thought I would have given any thing in the world for his picture; but I am not so happy as to have even that poor resemblance of him left me. However, at that trying moment I was so far supported, as not to shew any weakness to him. He had just before told his sisters the same thing, and that it became them and him to submit to the Divine will without repining, and that he had no regret for the shortness

lent piece: or, a sermon of Mr. NEW-
MAN'S (late minister of *Carter-Lane,*
London) on the *Case of the penitent*
Thief,

shortness of his life. They also bore it with great calmness, which, considering their age and vast affection for such a brother, was a wonder. But this suppressed grief now often gets vent in sighs and tears. He had the satisfaction to see his father before his death: his being on his circuit and necessary attendance on his duty in the session made it impossible for him to be with us here; but at my child's desire, his sisters and I attended him to a little neat house near *Edinburgh*; and there it was he died, or rather fell asleep, for he expired without a groan, and was buried in the *Abbey Church*, upon the 27th of *July*, his birth-day, near some of his worthy and dear relations, now in heaven.

His death was so easy, that his physician said, he had never in all his practice seen the like; and thro' every step of his illness there was a remarkable tender Providence watched over him. Even those who attended him felt the effects of it in the uncommon serenity and calmness they were supported in. While he lived, he himself had no symptom to the last that was shocking or distasteful.

Thief, which is a very judicious discourse. As to *visiting condemned malefactors*, it is very proper: for even a good man may be hurried into some capital crime: or repentance may begin immediately after the fact: at least, it is doing the best that can be done

S 3 to

ful. May I not be allowed to think, that a death so easy, I might say lovely, was a part of a merciful reward for a virtuous and well-spent life. Now, dear sir, tho' I could say a vast deal more, I ought to beg pardon for having said so much; but I know your goodness will pardon my having thus given vent to a fond afflicted heart. Sorrows like mine admit of no compliments; but believe Lord KILKERRAN and I will ever join in grateful acknowledgments of your care and tenderness to our beloved child, and your friendship and sympathy to us and ours. May Mrs. DODDRIDGE and you be long happy together, and blessed with the comfort of your promising children. I am, with the truest esteem, Reverend and dear Sir,

Your most humble and obliged servant,
JEAN FERGUSSON.

to alleviate future misery; and every thing should be tried, when eternity is near. There are some excellent reflections on such scenes in Archbishop TILLOTSON's two sermons on the Long-suffering of God, from *Ecclesiastes* viii. 11. particularly at the end of the first sermon. And I am much of his mind on this subject.*

The more I see of the world, (says Mr. ORTON) the more I am convinced, that no just idea can be formed of persons' characters, or future state, merely from the manner of their death: yet on these many lay great stress. Many would say, * * * made a good end: and some, may die in raptures of joy and triumph: and yet make no better. Deep humility, repenting, and believing, are surer evidences than magnanimity or transport. You see how small and trifling a part of a minister's work it is, to read the Visitation-Office to the Sick. It is of importance to go further, and to inquire what their lives have been, of others, and of themselves — what their views have been and are of themselves

— of

I think I put into your hands some time ago, WITHERSPOON's *Essay on the Connexion between the Doctrine of Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Christ, and Holiness of Life*, dedicated to MR. HERVEY. It was sent to me several years ago, by a gentleman of Glasgow, to whom I was a stranger.

S 4

I think

— of sin — their own guilt and danger — of Christ and the Gospel — of the terms of acceptance — of eternity — whether they have kept up secret prayer, and how — what hopes of glory, and on what they are founded — and how they operate in languishing and dying circumstances? Yet you will find some, who through ignorance cannot, or stupidity will not, give proper answers to such questions. They will assent to what you say, but drop nothing as of themselves, by which you can judge of their state. This I have frequently and mournfully experienced in attending the sick and dying. This is the most difficult part of a minister's work: yet allowance must be made for a bad education, small advantages, being unaccustomed to say any thing on these subjects. It is perhaps better to err on the suspicious side." — *Letter to a friend.*

I think it an admirable book: and, though I do not altogether approve of its title, yet I am much pleased with his reasoning, as equally strong and conclusive upon our ideas of redemption. He is a scotch divine, and author of the *Ecclesiastical Characteristics*.

Had you looked into the *Map of Oxfordshire*, you would have found Tackley, the seat of the DOWAGER LADY LICHFIELD, where Dr. STONHOUSE is lately gone. Let me advise you never to hear or read of a village, especially a market town, without examining where it is. Thus, much useful knowledge may be gained by degrees, and with little or no trouble. By taking this method, I have been of service to many tradesmen and others both at Shrewsbury and this town. — I wish you through the hurries of the day at * * * *. Remember the story I told you of an old divine, who being asked,

asked, why he wore a long beard, answered, "I do it to remind me never to do any thing inconsistent with the gravity of my appearance."

On Thursday last, as I was sitting at dinner, I felt an *earthquake*; and heard a rumbling noise, like a wheelbarrow going over some rough ground. It happened at one o'clock, and lasted about two seconds. Many others in the town felt it, and some were much alarmed. I wish such alarms may do good. But we seem to be proof against every thing that is serious, kind, and awful.

I am now reading an excellent old book, written by OBADIAH SEDGWICK, who was a member of the assembly of divines, entitled *The Anatomy of secret and presumptuous Sins, &c.* which pleaseth me much. His heads and enlargements are short and comprehensive, and free from the unprofitable

fitable jargon of those days; and his language is excellent for the time he wrote in. If you meet with any of his works, it will be worth your while to purchase them, as they may be bought for a trifle. They contain excellent matter, and come home more to men's consciences and bosoms, than the writings of many of our modern divines.

I am sorry for the mournful occasion your letter speaks of. You tell me you knew the deceased from a child. Should you not in such circumstances seriously inquire? "Did I ever attempt to do her any good? Did I ever drop a hint of counsel, advice and caution to her?" I love to ask myself such questions, when any of my neighbours and friends die. "Did I ever do them any harm, or speak evil of them? Had I ever an opportunity to do them good? Did I ever attempt

attempt it? These are useful inquiries. Remember these words: "And while I was busy here and there, behold he was gone," — the person I should have taken care of. — I did not expect you would be much improved or entertained by your visit to * * *. I fear the day was lost, which might more profitably have been spent in your studies and among your parishioners. Pray talk seriously to those of them, who neglect totally, or frequently, public worship. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering, say I: and you know who said it before me to a young minister. My hint will, I hope, engage your attention and consideration: St. Paul's, commands your reverence and obedience. — If you have not Mr. ADDINGTON's *Treatise on Afflictions*,* Mrs. * * will send it to you,

* Printed for BUCKLAND, in *Pater-noster-Row*, price three shillings.

you, in lieu of the book, which her good mother intended for you; in which you will find many useful things, that may be serviceable to yourself, and to your sick friends, whom you may visit.

I am but indifferent, and am often unfit for business or company, and my mental powers daily grow weaker. When I am disposed to be impatient, I think of two of my acquaintance, who are ground down with the stone, and labour after greater patience and thankfulness. But every disagreeable object appears formidable and dreadful to me, especially, the near approach of death. I much need, value, and desire the prayers of my friends.

Your's sincerely,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. On

P. S. On Tuesday last was my birth-day, when I compleated my sixty-first year. On that day thirteen years I preached my last sermon at *Shrewsbury*,* and have not been in a pulpit since ; yet, I hope, I have been of some little use and significancy in life by my correspondence and publications.

LETTER

* From *Eccles. vii. 2.* on which he made this memorandum : " This was the last sermon I preached to my congregation at *Shrewsbury*." And which he concludes with the following anecdote. — " The celebrated *GROTIUS*, one of the most learned men the world ever knew, was, in his last illness, attended by a friend, who desired him, in his great wisdom and learning, to give him a short direction how to lead his life to the best advantage. To whom he only said, *Be serious.* This is my parting advice to you, as what comprehends every thing I have said, — *Be serious.*"

LETTER XXVII.

DEAR SIR,

January, 1779.

BEING confined to-day by great rain, I know not how to employ my time better than in writing a letter to you; though whether I shall be able to finish it to-day in time for the post I know not: however I will do something towards it. — I am always glad to receive *chit-chat letters*, as they seem to come from the heart. Mr. POPE is I think right, who somewhere says, “The letters of friends are not worse for being fit for none else to read. The effusion of a moment ought to be the characteristick of all familiar writing. It is a strange recommendation, but a true one.” In this view, I had rather write twenty letters to a friend with whom

whom I can be free, than one to a person every way as good and valuable, and with whom I can be equally free, who is at the same time formal and accurate himself, and expects the letters of his correspondents to be so too. I do not love to write letters where compliments and apologies are necessary. Every thing that comes directly from the heart, and seems like conversation, is most agreeable to me. And indeed what is writing letters, but a kind of conversation, and therefore ought to be easy, free, and unreserved. Perhaps I am selfish in this sentiment, as I can seldom write more than a few lines at a time without being tired and in pain, and forced to lie down upon my couch; so that method and order must be neglected by me; but these I think should be easily excused in letters, especially where the writer's heart and his esteem for his correspondent

dent appear at first view, without any labour or study.*

I hope you have received the Bishop of CHESTER'S (Dr. PORTEUS) *Letter*,† which I returned to you some

* The letters that pass between particular friends, if they are written as they ought to be, can scarce ever be fit to see the light. They should not consist of fulsome compliments, or tedious polities, or elaborate elegancies, or general fancies, but they should have a native clearness and shortness, a domestical plainness, and a peculiar kind of familiarity; which can only affect the humour of those to whom they were intended. The very same passages, which make writings of this nature delightful amongst friends, will lose all manner of taste, when they come to be read by those that are indifferent. In such letters the souls of men should appear undressed; and in that negligent habit, they may be fit to be seen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad into the streets. — *Dr. SPAT'S Life of COWLEY.*

† A Letter to the inhabitants of *Manchester, Macclesfield, and the adjacent parts*, on occasion of the late earthquake in those places.

some time ago ; which is an exceeding good one, truly serious, full to the purpose and adapted to do good. His lordship's two sermons, which were preached at the Chapel Royal St. James's, are superexcellent. They were printed, as I have been informed, by the express command of the QUEEN, in order to be given away among the courtiers. — Dr. STONHOUSE sends me word, that the Bishop commended to him highly a sermon lately printed for CADELL, without a name, entitled, " A national change in morals and politics, necessary to national prosperity." The Bishop is an excellent judge of sermons, and I shall order it for our book-society.

I am glad you have so tolerable *a stock of sermons*. But you will go on composing new ones ; as thereby you will increase your theological knowledge ; a new subject always strikes,

and the natural love of novelty should be called in to the aid of religion. What hath a clergyman to do, but to give himself wholly to his work; increase his own, and his hearers' acquaintance with the scriptures; and be continually drawing, from that inexhaustible fountain, streams of living water, for their entertainment and nourishment.* How few are there among us, who like DANIEL WHISTON, the professor's brother, left behind him several hundred sermons, which he had never preached. This is the other extreme. — I will excuse your having a sermon to write on the Saturday, because the occasion of it was urgent and necessary; else I shall blame you,

* Dr. BALGUY for the first four years after he had obtained a small preferment, did not intermit one week without writing a new sermon; and all his sermons were of his own composition. — *Biograph. Britan.*

you, if ever you have a sermon to make on a Saturday. Dr. DONNE (as it is observed in his Life) always chose his text, for the next Lord's day, on the preceding Sunday evening, when he had finished the duty of that day. This was *my* method. I always contrived to have Saturday, as a kind of leisure day, to attend at the infirmary at *Shrewsbury*, or to do other business which (being market-day) it occasioned; and that I might by exercise and relaxation, get myself into better spirits for the labours of the sabbath. Only on a Saturday evening, I carefully reviewed my sermon, and committed the most striking parts of it, especially in the application, to memory. And I always spent my Saturday evenings at home, that I might prepare myself the better for the business of the following day.

I heartily wish you the return of many happy *birthdays* ;* and that each of them may afford you increasing pleasure in your own improvement, and the advancement of religion by your ministry. I have no doubt but you spent the day *religiously*; in thankfully acknowledging the goodness and mercy of God to you; in acts of humiliation for the vanity of childhood and youth; and in forming good resolutions for greater seriousness, diligence, and activity, as a christian and a minister. May God hear your prayers, accept your praises, and multiply his blessings upon you!

I am now reading MICHAELIS's *Introductory Lectures to the Sacred Books of the New Testament*, a small octavo volume, price three shillings. It is a good concise account of criticks, commentators, and their sentiments on the genuineness,

* December 14.

genuineness, authority, and inspiration of the books of the New Testament. It will refresh your memory with many things on those subjects ; but he doth not enter deeply into the controversies of them.

I have lately bought a scotch edition of FLAVELL's *Works*, in eight volumes octavo. The folio edition I had before ; but this I can read as I lie on my couch, or as I sit in my chair, smoaking my evening's pipe. I have read more of FLAVELL, since I was able to read at all, than any other writer ; and though he is by no means judicious, yet there is an amazing tenderness, and soft pathos in his style and manner ; and I am always pleased with his plainness, simplicity, great seriousness, and entertaining stories.*

T 3

I am

* FLAVELL. — Not remarkably judicious, but plain, popular, tender : proper to address afflicted

I am concerned that Mr. * * doth not apply more diligently to his studies; and it really grieves me to see young divines, who have good natural abilities, and have enjoyed considerable advantages in their education, contented to *glimmer*; when with more application, they might be burning and shining lights in the church, and the distinguished ornaments of christianity and their profession. I sometimes talk freely to my younger brethren on such topics;

afflicted cases, and to melt the soul in love: his Token for Mourners inimitable; Fountain of Life useful; most of the subjects there proper to be preached over on sacrament-days: allusion to pagan stories, both in him and BATES, very entertaining and useful. — DODDRIDGE.

BATES. — Charming eloquence; yet not formed style; sentences too short; words very polite: admirable similes; unless rather too thick; proper to be quoted by those whose genius does not lead them this way: read his Harmony of the Attributes, Spiritual Perfection, and Four last Things. — DODDRIDGE.

topics ; but in this age, young men do not in general, choose to attend to the most friendly advice of their seniors ; though delivered, not only tenderly, but respectfully. They are wiser, and have better ideas of divinity, especially, than those who have grown grey in study and in the ministry.

I think I have now written every thing I had to say to you — which has been done at many sittings — and I considered myself as talking with you.

— But this wet day makes me uncomfortable, and my letter is as dull as the day : yet fair or foul — bright or dull, I am,

Your faithful and affectionate
JOB ORTON.

P. S. Look over the next letter, with which you favour me ; for the last was written in haste, and there were some words in it which I could not

read. Let it be a rule with you, always to read over a letter before you seal it, correct whatever is wrong, make proper stops, that your correspondents may be at no loss to understand your meaning at once. This is one of Lord CHESTERFIELD's advices to his son; and if he had given him no worse, it would have been well.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

March, 1779.

I ACKNOWLEDGE myself in your debt, dear sir, for two letters; which, on account of the indifferent state of my health, I am obliged to answer as I can, writing a few lines at a time, as I find myself disposed, without any regard to order or method.

I am sorry you meet with difficulties and discouragements in your present situation; but I am in doubt what to say concerning a removal to S ***. I could wish you comfortably settled in a living of your own, where you would be more extensively useful; but am fearful you will find inconveniences in the place you think of; except you can fully resolve, and keep your resolution, to mind your proper business,

ness, and to guard against the avocations of S * * *. I think a clergyman is most respectable, who keeps to his study and parish, and engages as little as may be in mixed company. He should be careful not to *desecrate* himself by letting himself down. Have you ever read SCOUNGAL's *Works*, author of that tract which Bishop BURNET published, called, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man?* If you have not, pray inquire after it, and read it diligently and repeatedly. Give me leave to send you the following passage from his *Concio ad Clerum*. — *Quotidiana clericorum cum laicis conversatio, contemptibiles eos reddit.* — *Facile contemnitur clericus, si prandium invitatus, sepius veniat.* You will think of these maxims, and let them have their proper influence with you. SCOUNGAL was an episcopal divine, and son of a scotch bishop; a man of eminent learning and piety,

and

and a good model for useful preaching; but died very young.* May God direct you in all your motions, and fix you there, where you may do Him and his cause the most signal service! I know you will follow Providence, and not out-run it; and I hope look to probable, though remote, consequences, before you determine upon so important a change in your situation.

I intend presenting Dr. KENNICKOTT's Bible to the school-library in Shrewsbury; to which I have already given some valuable books. Our friend Dr. JOHNSTONE insists on my inserting in it the inclosed inscription; to which

* **Scougal.** — One of the first rank, though he wrote but little; remarkable for decent eloquence, suited to his subject: noble and proper thoughts, run through every page of his writings: seems the best model of all his class: his *Life of God*, and *Sermons*, should be often read. He died at twenty-eight, and the world had an unspeakable loss in him. — **DODDRIDGE.** MS.

which I have nothing to object, but its being rather pompous and full of self. But as the doctor has been at the trouble of drawing it up, I believe, I must be obliged to insert it.* I hear from *Oxford*, that Dr. KENNICOTT is much pleased with my intention.†

* Ut

In hoc municipio,
Dilecto natalium loco,
Quo

Proavi et parentes honeste et fanele vixerent;

Quo,

Coetus dissentientium protestantium pastor constitutus,
Ministerio sacro

Annos XXVI. ipse functus est;

Ut

In his scholis,

Quibus et linguarum cognitionem

Studio decennali haufit,

Amoris et benevolentiae

Pignus aliquod idoneum extaret;

Hoc opus eximum, honori S. S. S. dicatum,

Illustrissimi Ben. Kennicott, S. T. P.

Bibliothece donavit

Joh. Orton, S. T. P.

Et civis Salopiensis,

A. D. MDCCCLXXXI.

I am

† Dr. KENNICOTT had a great respect for
Mr.

I am glad to hear from you so good an account of Dr. ADAMS, whom you have lately seen. There are few men I honour more for every amiable quality. If you return to college soon, I desire you to present my respectful and affectionate compliments to him; and be sure to do all you can to learn of the doctor steadiness, prudence, firmness, mingled with the utmost good-nature, and readiness to serve others.* I have

nothing

Mr. ORTON; and once told a friend, that he wished to pay him a visit in *Shropshire*, as, among other reasons, it would give him an opportunity of calling upon *honest* Job ORTON in his way thither.

* In 1770, Mr. ORTON wrote two pamphlets, in defence of Dr. ADAMS, in answer to a Letter to the doctor by the author of *Pietas Oxoniensis*, entitled *Diotrepes admonished*, and *Diotrepes re-admonished*: in which the writer appears to have steered in a middle way between the

nothing to say about your academical studies and degree; but that I hope, you will purchase to yourself *a good degree*, and great boldness in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Tim. iii. 13,) and be master of the best arts, that of saving souls.

I am going over JORTIN's *Sermons* again — of which I am never weary; so plain, sensible, and judicious are they: tho' I sometimes suspect, that some of the sermons were not his own, as they are so different from others of them

the doctor and his antagonists, respecting some theological differences and distinctions. The author of them hoped, the controversy had done good, by exciting a spirit of enquiry into the contents of the Gospel, and leading many to read and think on religious subjects, who otherwise would not probably have done it. And he had the pleasure of hearing, that his tracts had been serviceable in this respect, especially in *Shropshire*, and that they were much valued by many respectable clergymen, particularly those of evangelical principles.

Another

them, which correspond more exactly to his way of writing in his tracts and other publications.* But they are all worth reading again and again; and I am persuaded those, which are most easy and familiar, were his own, for that is an excellency in his style, and almost peculiar to himself. Such sermons want nothing but a little more practical and lively application to make them compleat models for young divines. There is strong good sense and just reasoning in his discourses, generally

Another masterly pamphlet appeared in the same controversy, entitled, *The Church of England vindicated from the rigid Notions of Calvinism*; written by one of Dr. ADAMS's intimate friends; whose name, were it to be made publick, would do honour to the cause of learning and rational piety.*

* The late Reverend Mr. EDWARD BLAKEWAY, minister of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury.

* See the Gentleman's Magazine for Nov.
1784.

generally couched under the plainest language. But he had, as I have been told, a very heavy delivery.

I shall be glad to hear from you, and hope for a continuance of your prayers, that as my day is, my strength may be. My head begins to fail, my tongue stammers, my hands tremble, and I am sinking apace to the dust; but my concern for my friends, and the interests of religion, holds out still.* May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always with you! To that I heartily commend you in all your interests. And am,

Dear Sir,
Your faithful and affectionate
JOB ORTON.

* "Work and write while you can. You see Time has shaken me by the hand; and Death is but a little behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left: and I thank God for them." — *From a Letter of the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL WESLEY, to his son, the late celebrated Mr. JOHN WESLEY.*

N. B. Here the Editor finds it necessary to discontinue these Letters ; as, soon after the date of the last, he came to live at *Shrewsbury* ; and there are many things in Mr. ORTON's future correspondence with him, of a *local* and *too delicate* a nature to be laid before the publick eye. — This valuable man died July 19, 1783, in the sixty-sixth year of his age ; and was buried, agreeably to his own request, in St. *Chad's* Church, *Shrewsbury*. *Sic mihi contingat vivere, sicque mori.*

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED:
AND THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL BE HAD
IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE.

☞ Since these letters were first published (in 1791,) a short account of Mr. ORTON has been drawn up by the late Dr. KIPPIS, and inserted

in the 5th volume of the *Biographia Britannica*, under the article DODDRIDGE; where he writes thus:—"The last publication of Mr. ORTON that has been given to the publick, is, "Letters to a Young Clergyman," 12mo. 1791. Mr. STEEDMAN, to whom the letters were written, is the editor, and he has performed an acceptable service in committing them to the press. The advice contained in them is, in general, excellently fitted for the direction and improvement of the younger clergy of every denomination."

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